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The Causes of Social Revolt

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN LONDON, PORTSMOUTH, BRADFORD, NOTTINGHAM, DERBY, AND GREENWICH.

REVISED, WITH NOTES.

BY

CAPTAIN MAXSE, R.N.

"Evil is wrought by want of Thought,
As well as by want of Heart."

SECOND THOUSAND.

London:
LONGMANS, GREEN, READER, & DYER,
Paternoster Row.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

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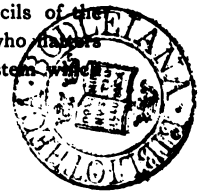
"Propose anything good; the answer is at hand—wild, visionary, theoretical, utopian, impracticable, dangerous, destructive, ruinous, anarchical, subversive of all Governments—there you have it."—BENTHAM.

"It is possible to play the part of a demagogue to a ruling as well as to a subject class, and he who demands that the voice of the poor should be heard in the councils of the State, is not so dangerous to the public peace as he who flatters the insolence of wealth, and bids it maintain a system which secures its own ascendency."—JAMES BRYCE.



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PATERNOSTER ROW.

1872.

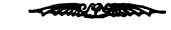
232. g. 183.

"The chiefest authors of revolutions have been not the chimerical and intemperate friends of progress, but the blind obstructors of progress; those who, in defiance of nature, struggle to avert the inevitable future, to recall the irrevocable past; who chafe to fury, by damming up its course, the river, which would otherwise flow calmly between its banks, which has ever flowed, and which, do what they will, must flow for ever."—*Goldwin Smith.*

"The English have thus become, in a certain sense, of all people the most inaccessible to ideas, and the most impatient of them. . . There has followed from hence, in this country, somewhat of a general depression of pure intelligence. Philistia has come to be thought by us as the true Land of Promise, and it is anything but that; the born lover of ideas, the born hater of commonplaces, must feel in this country that the sky over his head is of brass and iron.—"*Essays in Criticism.*" *By Matthew Arnold.*

"Ce n'est pas l'erreur qui s'oppose aux progrès de la vérité. Ce sont la mollesse, l'entêtement, l'esprit de routine, tout ce qui porte à l'inaction."—*Turgot.*

"For my own part, I can only say, that I have had occasion to read many thousand letters written by diplomatists and politicians, and I have hardly ever found an instance of one of them who understood the spirit and tendency of the age in which he lived."—*Buckle.*



INTRODUCTORY.

BEFORE I commence I desire to anticipate a criticism which will, in all probability, be made during the course of my lecture. I shall be found constantly referring in it to the different classes of society: and I may appear to some as the exclusive advocate of one class. You must, however, take into consideration the subject of my address. The meaning of Social Revolt is the revolt, active or passive, of one class of the community against another. The lecture must therefore be founded upon a recognition of Class divisions. I take society as I find it—an aggregate of classes. It seems to me mere hypocrisy to pretend to ignore that society is made up of classes. Who made classes? It is certain that working men did not voluntarily constitute themselves into a

class, the common characteristics of which are hard work and hard living. They find themselves, whether they like it or not, surrounded by adverse circumstances. It is easy enough for people whose position secures them abundance to deprecate class allusions. They forget that the enormous labour class[1] is condemned, generation after generation, to an incessant struggle for mere existence. And so long as this struggle continues, a cry must come up, increasing in volume as intelligence spreads, for a less hazardous state. *This class has as yet to inherit civilization.* If all nations which have attained eminence hitherto have fallen, it is because they have none of them developed a civilization worth preservation. Their civilization has only been a partial one; the result of a compromise between various conflicting articulate interests, in which the manual labour class interest has wanted expression—and may be said to have remained inarticulate. No civilization is worth preserving unless it be—or is likely to become—the property of the many. Nature only cares to preserve the good. The imperfect and the abortive invariably perish.

[1] A class so large that Auguste Comte has said: "The working class is not, properly speaking, a class at all, but constitutes the body of society. From it proceed the various classes, which we may regard as organs necessary for that body."

I am not the advocate of one class. I speak in the interest of all classes. An enlightened and humane mind will readily perceive that what is good for working-men is good for the whole community. Civilization stops, falters, and threatens to recoil, until they acquire that position of physical and moral welfare, as well as legitimate influence, which accord with our highest conceptions of justice. I am not here to flatter working-men by assuring them that they are better than the men of other classes: in my opinion, the good, the indifferent, and the bad are distributed with tolerable impartiality throughout all sections of society. I do not tell them they have more wisdom than is to be found elsewhere. If I appeal to them especially, it is because, fortunately for humanity, they have (irrespective of their generous aspirations) a direct interest in human progress which belongs to no other class. But the appeal I make is one I am anxious to address to all classes: and I sincerely hope that there are some of all classes present.

The Causes of Social Revolt.

I propose in this lecture to offer some observations upon the causes which lead to Social Revolt. Last year we witnessed a terrible instance of this in a country which is reputed to be one of the most civilized in the world. The only consolation we can derive from so vast a misfortune is to appreciate the lesson it offers. In my opinion the true lesson of the Paris Revolt has so far been completely misunderstood. As, however, the circumstances which produced, or rather precipitated the Paris insurrection, were exceptional, I shall not confine myself to the consideration of the causes of this particular revolt; but propose to call your attention to those general causes of Social Revolt which are common to all countries that have attained a certain precarious stage of progress, and especially to the shape which they assume in our own country.

I venture to think that I am not ill-qualified to offer you some thought upon this subject. Living as I have done from childhood in an upper class atmosphere, and yet led by the irresistible force of conscientious conviction to espouse—as the cause of human justice—the Democratic cause, I have become the political associate of its supporters, and have thus been continually occupied in listening to both sides. The proposition and its refutation, I may say, I have received simultaneously. No sooner has my conscience, warmed by sympathy, acquainted me with a vast human wrong, resulting from a vast human error, than a sincere teacher (I might say tempter) has been at hand, to reprove me for my backsliding, and to demonstrate that every thing is for the best, wrongs included. And so I have received ample opportunity for studying the respective frames of mind and temper of the classes developing antagonistic views—for observing how they are influenced and how they are circumstanced—and hence for forming some opinion as to the principal causes which, on the one hand, lead well meaning and benevolent people to present a merciless aspect—(to consign men to God's mercy when they have none themselves); and on the other, prepare the way for Social Revolt.

The Primary Cause.

The primary cause of social discontent is best disclosed by a simple question: Is the present state of society a satisfactory one? The reply will much depend upon our standard of comparison. If we compare ourselves with an inferior state (as is the custom of supine people) the reply may be "Yes." It is, however, the habit of reformers, in this as in all ages—and it is to them we owe all that we have got good—to test the existing state by a high standard of human welfare. We therefore assume, without insisting upon a Utopian ideal, that the majority of human beings (including the majority of little children) should be sufficiently fed, comfortably clothed, decently housed, and generally in a position to appreciate the dignity of human life. Is this the case in our present state of society? An honest man can give but one reply to this question. It is certain that the majority of human beings, even though they spend their lives in unremitting toil, have considerable difficulty in securing the means of subsistence for themselves and their families. Will any man who uses his senses dare to deny the extensive misery which prevails among that portion of the population which is

huddled up in the great towns; or, that the peasantry in our thinly populated rural districts are among the worst paid, and most joyless in the world? Can such a state of society be deemed satisfactory? The minority in this state who are advantageously placed, declare that such is the natural state of society, and inform the majority that their belief in a remedy is the result of ignorance. It is not unnatural that the man who is born in easy circumstances, and solely governed by a personal standard of happiness, who—by the mere process of dipping his hand into an inexhaustible pocket—always commands luxurious residence and repast, whether at home or abroad, as well as unlimited sources of personal excitement and amusement; who has been steeped from infancy in Upper Class fallacies and prejudices, and trained to believe that every man (including each of our 3,000,000 paupers)[1] is already "in that state of life in which it has pleased God to place him:" it is not unnatural, I say, that such a man should be not less indifferent to projects of reform than he is incredulous of their efficacy. Neither is it strange that he fails to realize the actual picture which society, viewed as a whole, presents. For those, however, who suffer from, and for those who conscientiously

[1] *Vide* Baxter's "National Income," p. 87.

study the Social Fabric, any evidence as to its real character may be deemed superfluous.

Yet it may be as well before proceeding to take a glimpse or two at that large portion of the social picture which prosperous and superficial optimists are so apt to conceal.

For a revelation of the condition of the agricultural poor, I cannot do better than refer you to the Report of the Royal Commission on the employment of Children, Young Persons, and Women in Agriculture. Is it possible that those gentlemen who prate about preserving our "glorious institutions" as the whole duty of politicians, who are constantly singing "Rule Britannia," and some of whom are prepared to "brickbat" reformers,—have read this truly awful account of the condition of the agricultural population? For myself I am overwhelmed with indignation and shame when I reflect upon its revelation of rural misery; to which is added a feeling of despair when I witness the apathy with which this report has been received by the possessors of power. Three years have passed since it was published, and were another one issued now, there would be no variation in the dismal tale[1]. For the condition of a town population

[1] The Bishop of Manchester, in speaking of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Sussex, and Gloucester, says:—"*The majority of the*

read some interesting information recently published in the *Clerkenwell News*, upon the overcrowded state of the metropolis. This passage is instructive :—

"From statistical returns bearing on the condition of St. Giles, it appears that in one district there were 600 families, and of these 570 severally occupied but one room. In another of 700 families, 550 occupied but one room. In another district, out of 500 families 450 occupied but one room each. In one room visited in this parish, which was 12 feet by 13 feet, and 7 feet 6 inches high, eight persons lived, and the rent was 4*s.* a week; another room, 13 feet by 5 feet, and 6½ feet high, contained five children and their parents, the rent being 4*s.* a week also."

Or study Mr. Greenwood's "Seven Curses of London," and ponder this introductory paragraph: "In England and Wales alone, at the present time, the number of children under the age of

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cottages that exist in rural parishes are deficient in almost every requisite that should constitute a home in a civilized community. . . . . It is impossible to exaggerate the ill effects of such a state of things in every aspect—physical, social, economical, moral, intellectual. Physically in combination with low diet it generates all manner of disease among the poor. . . . . The moral consequences are fearful to contemplate."

From Cambridgeshire Mr. Portman reports that "*labourers as a rule are worse lodged than cattle, and worse cared for.*"

In Hants boys are made waggoners' mates before they are ten. "As soon as a boy becomes a mate almost all opportunity of self-improvement is gone. *A boy works from* 6 A.M. *till* 9 P.M. *and is entirely under the control of the waggoner, almost invariably an utterly ignorant man.*"

sixteen, dependent more or less on the parochial authorities for maintenance, amounts to 350,000." Mr. Scott Russell,[1] an eminent English engineer, who has been lately endeavouring to confuse political thought, by creating a fourth political party, gives the following evidence upon the position of English workmen in particular:—

"Twenty years of experience and frequent opportunities of studying foreign countries have deepened my conviction that, while there is no finer breed of working men in the world than the British skilled workman, there is no civilized country in which his interests are so little cared for, and in which the institutions, laws, and customs are so unfavourable to his material well-being and to his moral development."

The following statement concerning the state of pauperism in the country I take from the *Co-operative News* of Nov. 25th, 1871:—

"The immense strides made in our commerce will be manifest when it is stated that, whilst in 1770 the value of our entire exports amounted only to £15,994,572, in 1870 they reached the sum of £199,640,983, or more than twelve times as much in the latter year as the former, whilst, in consequence of the fall in the value of goods, if the exports were measured by bulk, they would at least be forty times as great.

"It would naturally be expected that, with such superior manufacturing facilities, and such an enormous commerce, the

[1] As Mr. Scott Russell, in a recent manifesto, addresses working-men as "Fellow workmen," I venture to refer him to a passage from a lecture by Professor Beesly.—*Vide* Appendix I.

people would universally have been placed far above the reach of want. Such, however, unfortunately is not the case, for on the 1st of January, 1871, the number of paupers in the United Kingdom numbered 1,282,034, or nearly one in twenty-four of the entire population.

"Enormous, however, and lamentable as these figures are, they do not represent the whole of the evil, they represent merely the number of paupers who happen to be on the books on the 1st of January. There are large numbers who get relief for a period of one, two, or three weeks, or perhaps for three or four or more months during the year, but who, not being on the books on the 1st of January, are not reckoned, and, therefore, these tables give us but an imperfect idea of the destitution which exists in our land.

"According to Mr. Purdy, who is at the head of the statistical department of the Poor Law Board, the total number of persons who get relief during the year is about three and a half times the number who are on the books on the 1st of January. If this be so, the number of persons who became paupers, and got parish relief during 1870, was about four and a half millions, and if to these be added those people who, when destitute, apply to their friends for help, and never trouble the parish, it will give about 6,000,000 persons, or nearly *one in six of the entire population*, who during last year were destitute, and had to be assisted either by their friends or the parish."

I now give you a quotation which represents the opinion of our present social system held by one of the most eminent political economists in Europe :—

"The produce of labour," says John Stuart Mill, "is redistributed at the present time in an almost inverse ratio to the labour supplied; the greatest return falls to the lot of those who

never work; after them, to those whose work is only nominal, and thus, in a descending scale, wages are reduced in proportion as the labour becomes more onerous and more disagreeable, until at last that which is the most fatiguing and pernicious to the body, can scarcely secure with certainty the acquisition of the immediate necessities of existence."

But for a comprehensive and graphic description of the social problem, hardly any equals the one given by the master hand of Mr. Frederic Harrison in the *Fortnightly Review* of August last. He says,

"What in a few words is the social problem? It is this. In this complex industrial system wealth has discovered the machinery by which the principal, in some cases the whole, results of common labour become its special perquisites. Ten thousand miners delve and toil, giving their labour, risking their lives; ten masters give their direction or their capital, oftenest only the latter. And in a generation the ten capitalists are rioting in vast fortunes, and the ten thousand workmen are rotting in their graves, or in a workhouse. And yet the ten thousand were at least as necessary to the work as the ten. Yet more. The ten capitalists are practically the law-makers, the magistrates, the government. The educators of youth, the priests of all creeds, are their creatures. Practically they make and interpret the law—the law of the land, the law of opinion, and the law of God; they are masters of the whole social forces.

"A convenient faith has been invented for them by moralists and economists, the only faith which in these days they at all believe in—the faith that the good of mankind is somehow promoted by a persevering course of selfishness. Competition is, in fact, the whole duty of man. And thus it comes that in ten thousand ways the whole social force is directed for the benefit of

those who have. Habitually, unconsciously, often with what they think is a religious sense of duty, they work the machinery of society for their own objects. In this favoured land, whilst the owner of the soil knows no other toil or care but that of providing fresh modes of enjoyment, the peasant, out of whose sweat his luxury is wrung, lives like a beast of burden; whilst the merchant prince is courting society for a peerage, a thousand lives of seamen are lost, decoyed in rotten ships to sea; whilst mine owners can still paralyze the Legislature, a thousand lives are lost each year in pits, 'chiefly, it is said, from preventible causes;' and whilst fortunes are reared by ironmasters, a hundred thousand workmen are ground to the dust by truck. Let us reflect what is implied in this mere finding of the late Commission. One hundred thousand families in England are cheated, insulted, and oppressed by being forced to barter portions of their wages for some fraudulent equivalent in goods."

Now all this makes up, as Mr. Harrison says, "in the gross," what is called the Social Problem. We must deal with facts,—not theories. The result of Feudalism, Conservatism, Whiggism, and Commercialism is before us.

The Individual Competitive Theory.

The theory which is presented to reconcile us with the fact of Wholesale Misery, is that "if each individual improve *himself*, we shall all be improved." Alas! however, the circumstances of life are not prepared by the

individual, and a vast number of individuals are so battered and driven by circumstances that they can hardly realize the "I" at all; it is lost in the helpless flock. It is vain, nay, it is hypocritical, to pretend that the labouring poor might be this or that if they were of an exceptional human mould, and displayed the heroic virtues. No one is more disposed than myself to preach upon the value of self-help, self-reliance, sobriety and industry. I would counsel the practice of these virtues to all as the principal means to individual regeneration; but, at the same time, while doing this, it is only just to remember that there are circumstances *produced* by society, uncontrollable by the individual, which are fatal to the development of high qualities in average human nature; and that it is the capacity of average human nature we are bound to consider. "Misery is a soil not propitious to the growth of moral excellence[1]." It has been said, with truth, that man is the creature of circumstance[2]. Judging from my own character and experience, I feel convinced that if I had been brought up as a child in squalor and ignorance,—with no influence brought

[1] "The True Scope of Economic Science." By Dr. Hodgson.

[2] "Circumstances make guilt. Let us correct the circumstances before we rail against the guilt."——Lord Lytton.

to bear upon me capable of developing a sense of dignity or duty, or of stirring a moral nature,—having no higher object than the satisfaction of material wants,—confined entirely to animal sources of recreation[1]—outcast from all that is noble in life, I should have stood an excellent chance of being now either a drunkard, a pauper, or a criminal. Circumstances would have made me this, and society would have been responsible for the circumstances. There is profound truth expressed in the following verse which a shrewd old northern farmer addresses to his son :—

" 'Tis'n them as 'as munny as breäks into 'ouses an' steäls,
Them as 'as coäts to their backs an' taäkes their regular meäls
Noä, but its them as niver knaws wheer a meäl's to be 'ad
Taäke my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp is bad." [2]

This is an illustration of a common case, in which there is clearly no opportunity for improvement, and as there are similar inexorable circumstances frequently greeting childhood in this country which inevitably manufacture the pauper or worse, so are there inexorable circumstances (all the result of human error, apathy, and selfishness on the part of those who have hitherto usurped control over the forces of society) which condemn vast masses of men, honest, laborious, sentient human beings to lives of

[1] See Appendix II. [2] Tennyson; an orthodox poet.

stupifying toil, only interrupted by periods of blank distress.

It is necessary to speak the truth upon this subject. I should be very sorry to weaken for a moment that brave spirit of self-reliance which enables so many men to overcome the difficulties of their position, and to maintain in spite of them a footing of safety. I am not, however, afraid that anything I say will affect immediate necessities: and we are here as politicians to exchange thought, and investigate the truth. Therefore I speak without reserve. I maintain that the plausible theory which is so glibly advanced to justify the present state of affairs: namely, that every working man has it in his own power to rise from the labour class to comfort and ease, is entirely untenable while circumstances continue as they are at present. Also that it is upon the face of it an absurdity and contradiction; for, to rise from the labour class means that you leave people below you; and yet, if each can rise all can rise, and if all can rise to independence, that is, to the level of assured livelihood, as well as to a prospect of well being for their children—and there can be no independence or ease without this—where is the "labour" class, with starvation, which, according to the *Spectator*, is "the *divinely appointed* penalty of idleness and

unthrift[1]?" No man can rise to security of position until he has saved sufficient capital to render him interest. Can all labourers,—can half the manual labour class of the kingdom (representing 10,000,000 persons) look forward to becoming capitalists? We know perfectly well that what is called the "prosperity" of society is based upon the contrary assumption. When we examine this matter honestly and without class bigotry and conceit, we discover that our boasted prosperity is logically based upon a deliberate calculation of a fixed and extensive element of human misery and helplessness; and that without the fulfilment of this essential condition of its being, society, as at present constituted, must dissolve.

[1] *Spectator*, June 25th, 1870. Here we have a specimen of the old trick of preaching the Devil as God (or evil as good) with a vengeance. According to this doctrine the wealthy say, monopolising everything, addressing the labouring poor,—"Continue to minister to our wants, industry is life;" and preaching virtue they may abandon themselves to surfeit; and we have, as a result, the one class doomed to struggle for mere existence, with Death, the "divinely appointed penalty for idleness and unthrift;" and for the other class a life of voluptuous luxury and self indulgence —the utmost penalty of which is a not inconsolable nausea.

Popular Political Economy.

Some people imagine that they have discovered the true and final basis of social life in what they call political economy, and present this to the working classes as the infallible nostrum for all their complaints. But the vulgar translation of political economy is unlimited competition, which has well been described as a system in which every man is for himself and the devil for the hindmost. It is, to use the words of a celebrated French writer, "the code of Egoism: a war to the death between those who work and those who give work: those who sell and those who buy: those who revel in abundance and those who starve[1]." Nevertheless the doctrine of unlimited competition, dignified by the title of political economy, has become an authority to which the world appeals to justify the unscrupulous and disorderly use of wealth. It is made to sanction every form of selfish license. It supplies to the rich a satisfactory tranquillising explanation of the existence of misery, signifying to them a natural law which regulates the distribution of wealth[2].

[1] Lamartine.

[2] Mr. Lowe gave notable expression to this view in a speech on the Irish Land Bill during the Session of 1869. He said, "Political Economy is the science of the rules for the protection, the accumulation, the distribution, and the consumption of wealth. It will assert itself whether you wish it or not. No power can change it."

If men starve, they ought to starve in obedience to the inexorable laws of supply and demand. And if working men strike for the purpose of obtaining higher wages, they are informed with compassion that they violate these sacred laws and endanger the national prosperity[1]. Mr. Newmarch, in delivering his presidential address at the last Social Science meeting, complains of trades' unions for "sinking the individual in the mass" as if he were quite incapable of appreciating the merit of a scheme which aims to raise the individual *with the mass*. His doctrine appa-

[1] Some sensible words upon the bugbear of foreign competition have been recently spoken by Mr. Lloyd Jones in the *Mechanics' Magazine*. He says,—"When we talk of 'foreign competition' who is it that we compete with? When our traders go to Russia, Holland, France, China, Java, India, or elsewhere, do they find foreign manufacturers with the same kind of goods manufactured in foreign countries ready to compete with them for custom, or do they not rather find that the competition lies principally between themselves, and that a firm from one street in Manchester, Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield, or Birmingham, competing against firms in the next street, or even in the same street, have a far stronger influence in bringing down prices and starving profits than foreign competition of any kind from any foreign country? These people fight each other in foreign markets as they do in home markets, and in their hunger to do business they overstock all markets, and then, when a glut chokes up all channels of supply, and so much manufacturing industry as is necessary moves slowly along, reduction of wages is the grand panacea upon which over-done speculators rely. The English artisan, who has

rently is that individuals are only to think of themselves, and scrambling over the heads of their fellows leave behind that constant residuum of misery and helplessness to which I have already referred. It is to the credit of humanity that a better idea has entered the heads of working men.

Mr. Newmarch extols "perfect freedom of action and contract, cheap and speedy justice"—as if there could be perfect freedom of action and contract between the solitary labourer, whose capital consisting solely of his labour cannot accumulate and be stored, in making a bargain

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nothing to do with this reckless speculation, and who has been unduly overworked while it lasted, is asked to lower his wages, when the collapse comes, and patriotically starve while it continues, and if he does not meekly and submissively fall in with this, he is flouted and abused as a stupid and ignorant trade unionist, who knows nothing whatever of the sublime and infallible laws of demand and supply."

Then he asks, "Under what principle in law, in morality, in economy, in reason, or in nature, is England called upon to insist on doing the whole of the world's work? Why should we insist on manufacturing cotton, or wool, or iron for the whole earth? Or why only do we feel ourselves happy when we are called on to sweat every hour of our lives in doing this? We may be told that this has become a policy with us because there is a profit in it, and the answer will be satisfactory to whoever participates in the profit, but if the working man *find that he is not a participator*, that he must work every endurable hour, and for the smallest pay—is there any reason why he should quietly fall-to and go through his drudgery with a contented mind?"

with the employer whose capital *is* accumulated and can wait[1]. We know from the condition of our reduced peasantry that the result of "freedom of action and contract" between the solitary labourer and the employer is the unconditional surrender of the former. He is driven to it by his physical necessities: and in many districts nobly vindicates the theory of so-called political economy by accepting starvation wages. At the same time I beg you will not imagine that I undervalue political economy as a science to investigate the causes of wealth under certain given conditions. The error consists in regarding these conditions as inalterable. The best masters of political economy protest themselves against

[1] "Labourers cannot postpone the sale of their labour without incurring a loss corresponding exactly with the length of the postponement. So far as the morning's labour is concerned, it is of no use to them to know that the demand for labour will be twice as great in the afternoon as it is now, or that it is twice as great twenty miles off as it is here; for the morning's labour cannot be sold at all if they wait till the afternoon, or if they occupy the whole morning in walking to another place of sale."

"Owing to two causes—one, labour's inability to keep, the other, the habitual poverty of labourers—labour is almost always sold without reservation of price."

"The profit which the farmer fails to realize to-day may be realized hereafter, for the corn may be as available for sale to-morrow, or six months hence, as now. But, if the profit which

the manner in which it is misrepresented by shallow politicians. Mr. Mill says that the routine politicians "believe themselves to be provided with a set of catch words, which they mistake for principles—free trade, freedom of contract, competition, demand and supply, the wages fund, &c.—which supersede analysis, and are applicable to every variety of case without the trouble of thought;" and he quotes with approval the following passage from Mr. Cliffe Leslie, whom he terms one of the best living writers on political economy:—

"A school of economists of no small pretension, strongly represented in parliament,[1] supposes itself to be furnished with a complete apparatus of formulas, within which all economic knowledge is comprised, which clearly and satisfactorily expounds

might be made by the sale of to-day's labour be not made to-day, it can never be made at all, for to-morrow there will be none of to day's labour left to sell."

These extracts are taken from Mr. W. T. Thornton's book "On Labour," a work the study of which should be made a qualification for entering Parliament. It is of course hopeless to expect that above twenty members of the hereditary house should have time even to inform themselves of the existence of such a book. The shameful thing is, in regard to these extracts, that an able man should be called on to spend his time in elaborating the self-evident proposition they contain. This could only be the case in a community the moral sense of which has been completely blunted by a persistent course of self-complacency and Pharisaic teaching.

[1] Mr. Lowe being their spokesman. *Vide* note p. 21.

all the phenomena of wealth, and renders all further investigation of the causes and effects of the existing economy of society needless and even mischievous, as tending to introduce doubt and heresy into a scientific world of certainty and truth, and discontent and disturbance into a social world of order and prosperity."

Professor Cairnes repudiates the *laisser faire* explanation of political economy and the mere vindication of freedom of industrial enterprise and of contract as the one and sufficient solution of all industrial problems, adding "as if it were an obvious thing that people know their own interests in the sense in which they coincide with the interests of others, and that, knowing them they must follow them, as if there were no such thing in the world as passion, prejudice, custom, esprit de corps, class interest to draw people aside from the pursuit of their interests in the largest and highest sense[1]!"

Democracy v. *Aristocracy.*

It may be enquired here, supposing the competition or universal scramble theory to be rejected. in which direction we have to look for reform? To the various movements which I commend to your support, I shall refer at the conclusion of my lecture. All that I will say now is that we have, by the adoption of wise and generous measures,

[1] See also "The True Scope of Economic Science." By Dr. Hodgson.

as far as possible to equalise the chances of life. No sensible man believes in equality of either character, or of position except as the result of character. There are ranks which are established by nature. There are manifestly superior men and inferior men, men of talent, and men of mediocrity. For my own part, I am always prepared joyfully to acknowledge my superior; but I can only recognise superiority which is established by intellectual capacity and moral worth, and I am happy to think that the aristocracy I recognise is by no means a limited one. But the false aristocrats have usurped the position of the true aristocrats (the word aristocracy being derived from Greek words, "Aristos," best, and "Kratos," strength). Mr. Carlyle says that democracy means "despair of finding any heroes to govern you." It appears to me, on the contrary, that, while democracy has a healthy horror of Mr. Carlyle's military heroes, it searches for and honours true heroes; but as the servants[1], not as the oppressors, of humanity. It is the aim of democracy to depose the mock superior[2], and to establish the real superior; its motto is "honour to whom honour is due."

Upon another occasion, Mr. Carlyle, who, while

[1] "If any man be chief among you, let him be your servant."

[2] See Appendix III.

he is the most powerful calumniator of democracy is also the great apostle of King-ship, force, oppression, and servility[1], does homage to what he calls the "heaven-born docility of man." I join with him in this homage, but in proportion as I am impressed with the beauty of human reverence and submission, so am I filled with indignation at the unscrupulous advantage which has been taken of it by those who have hitherto ruled society. Is the "heaven-born docility of man" in this country directed to real worth, or to the worship of mammon? Who are the people looked up to? What order of superior is given? Has the aristocratic rank, which the "heaven-born docility of man" is taught to revere, and which poor ignorant children and peasants are trained to doff their caps to, been obtained by the practice of virtue, by industry, self-sacrifice, or the display of knowledge?

Listen to this comparison of true with false nobility drawn by one of England's greatest historians, Mr. Buckle, whose teaching I need hardly say is carefully excluded from "National Schools."

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[1] "Man is for Mr. Carlyle, as for the Calvinistic theologian, a fallen and depraved being, without much hope, except for a few of the elect. The best thing that can happen to the poor creature is, that he should be thoroughly well drilled."—*Critical Miscellanies. By John Morley.*

"The hall of science is the temple of democracy. The greatness of men has no connexion with the splendour of their titles, or the dignity of their birth; it is not concerned with their quarterings, their escutcheons, their descents, their chevrons, their bends, their azures, their gules, and the other trumperies of their heraldry; but it depends upon the largeness of their minds, the power of their intellect, and the fulness of their knowledge."

Or take the rank which stands abreast the patrician rank,—the moneyed position. Has this power been obtained by the exercise of high qualities? Why such are the means by which wealth is accumulated, and so selfish is its whole pursuit, that I am almost prepared to lay it down as an axiom that no high-minded man[1] will devote himself to the pursuit of riches. Yet poor duped "heaven-born docility" is led to regard individual fortune-making as one of the highest objects of human ambition. Lastly, there is the religious rank,—who stands highest here? Is it not rather the man who professes a creed, who is ostentatious in ceremonial, who is a regular church or chapel goer, who accepts the conventional creed and mumbles the usual Shibboleth,—is it not he who receives public reverence rather

[1] When I say this, I am, of course, aware that numbers of kind and amiable men do make riches their pursuit; nevertheless, attaching a proper signification to "high-minded," and bearing in mind the distinction between working for a competence and working for riches, I maintain that my proposition holds.

than the man who looks within for the eternal light[1], who, may be, rejects the nearest creed, but whose whole life is actuated by that spirit of devotion to the ideal which is the imperishable source of all religions? These demoralising and superficial grades, sustained by flunky devotion to spurious nobility—by obsequiousness to ill-gotten or never-mind-how-gotten wealth—or by the dark and deadening hand of superstition—Democracy scorns, disowns, and rejects.

Democratic Aspirations cannot be Suppressed by Bayonets or Acts of Parliament.

I have pointed out the fundamental vice which lies at the base of society, it is that misery forms one of its indispensable constituent elements. As soon as we recognise this fact we become acquainted with the constant cause of social revolt. So long as this is the case, the prosperity of society is superficial, and social revolt must follow as an inevitable result of the relation between cause and effect. Those who suffer will always, provided they have intelligence and courage, rebel against what seems to them to be

[1] "Religion is to each individual according to the inward light, with which he is endowed."—*Buckle.*

a gross injustice, and so long as compassion, generosity, and chivalry, continue to be human qualities, they will never lack for leaders and sympathisers among those who are better off than themselves. We may dragoon, sabre, and shoot down democracy by means of deluded peasants, dressed up in uniform, in the manner they have been doing recently in Paris; we may invent every hideous epithet wherewith to depreciate those who labour for the collective improvement of mankind: we may assail the believers in a higher state upon earth as Atheists—we may libel them as Anarchists, or label them as Demagogues —still, while the divine inspiration of human justice, the glowing vivid idea, not the parrot formula, continues to survive, so long will men be found, some madly but others wisely, to devote themselves to an incessant struggle for radical change. It is as well that society should realize this. There is a class of politician in this country which seems to imagine that social movement—that the organised uplifting of the human voice against social wrong—can and ought to be put down by Act of Parliament. Mr. Baillie Cochrane appears to belong to this class; he wrote to the *Times* last year, apparently to demand the suppression of the International Society. I might just as well ask for the sup-

pression of the Conservative party; and if I were to find myself in the House of Commons (a remote prospect, for, under the present electoral system, few men of radical thought can enter there), when Mr. Baillie Cochrane moved for the suppression of the International, the spirit of irony would prompt me to bring forward a counter proposition for the suppression of that most formidable engine of mischief and calamity to society, the Conservative party. I say this without pretending to have mastered all the principles of the International, but from knowing some of them to be good, and believing others to have been misrepresented, (as are all democratic principles) or certainly not to have taken root in this country; and in *any* case demanding the fullest liberty of speech for all shades of opinion.

The Position of the Daily Press [1].

I now return to the consideration of the causes which lead to Social Revolt. I believe one of

[1] My remarks are intended to apply chiefly to the Metropolitan Daily Press, because it is this which is treated and regarded as the National Daily Press, while the Daily Press which appears elsewhere than in London is almost designated "non-national" by the term "Provincial" which is invariably attached to it. Yet London daily papers are by no means superior to their

the most powerful of these, affording at the same time one of the most curious features which mark the present transitional stage of civilization, is the imperfection of mental communication between classes. Passing from the active opinion of one class to the active opinion of another class, we encounter different worlds of ideas, and it would almost seem as if there was some resisting medium between them, which defied the exchange of unadulterated thought. Sometimes an enterprising missionary struck with the importance of exchanging, not only material service, but also ideas and aspirations, starts to convey their purport from one to the other. He finds, however, that, though human qualities and intelligence are much the same in either class, an unconquerable suspicion and misunderstanding renders his effort abortive. Now, in my opinion, the principal agent in producing this misunderstanding is the Metropolitan Daily Press. There never was a greater fallacy, or a more dangerous delusion, than the common supposition that the Daily Press is representative of national opinion. So far

country rivals. Indeed they are frequently inferior to them. If I may judge by the one or two copies I have seen of the "Newcastle Daily Chronicle," I should say that there are few London journals which can compete with it either in earnestness of thought or vigour of writing.

from the daily newspapers being the organs of thought, I have no hesitation in saying that they are organs for the *suppression* of much of the most earnest and vital thought in the country. They exist upon a false pretence. It seems to be generally ignored that they are founded purely upon a commercial basis; their primary object being to sell as many copies as possible. In order to be successful they have to conciliate the greatest number of readers, and the great bulk of daily newspaper readers belong to the upper and middle classes, to whom active political opinion is unpalatable, unless it corresponds with upper and middle class views. They look to circulation among the paying class, and radicalism is mostly an offence to the paying class. For this reason the *Morning Star* expired, and for the same reason successful journals are negative in thought; and though they assume extravagant pretensions to represent public opinion, they are the mere organs of wealth and trade. I do not blame them for this; I am only anxious to expose the radical misconception which treats them as veritable exponents of national thought. It may be easily shown that the main function of all the daily newspapers, commencing with *The Times* and ending with the *Echo*, is to cater to the amusement of a prosper-

ous and dilettante public. We have an illustration of this in the prominence which has recently been given to reports of the Tichborne trial. Everything has had to make way for this very trivial but sensational scandal. The space and importance which have been immediately accorded to this entertainment of gossip, intrigue, and exposure of private affairs, gives us a useful measure of the character of the ordinary newspaper reader's demand. We are thus informed what is the most paying of newspaper ware. It is not long since a case which was quite revolting in its nature received likewise conspicuous report. These, however, are exceptional opportunities for attracting readers, which only present themselves at intervals. But there are certain standing features in the daily sheet which are apparently indispensable to its success. Who has ever known a daily paper, however great its press of Parliamentary debate or political speech, sacrifice its columns of "Sporting Intelligence" or, when do we miss the Stock and Share list? How often do we find three columns of *The Times* devoted to an account of a drawing room, or of the people who figure at a State Ball; or to the childish details of a royal procession?

I have it upon good authority that the editor of the *Daily News* in excusing himself, last year, for

giving an obscure notice of an important meeting, said that he was so pressed for space that he had been compelled to reject seventeen columns of important matter: yet I saw on the following day no less than four and a half columns given in large type to an account of the opening of the Albert Hall, an entirely insignificant proceeding, except to that small portion of the nation represented by the pleasure-seeking public and the shareholders who had a personal interest in the venture.

The devotion of so much space on the part of our professed organs of national opinion to the frivolous public, we might not grudge, if the remaining space allotted to the discussion of subjects of national interest were fairly surrendered to conflicting representative thought. But all the speeches and all the thought are on one side. While there are no less than ten daily papers engaged from morning to evening, monopolising by means of wealth all the highest literary skill in the market, in preaching, each with an air of infallible wisdom, on behalf of successful trade or indolent wealth, the policy of repose, compromise, and procrastination, there is not a single daily organ to represent the views of active progressive thought. It is true that the existing daily organs represent differences of

opinion—that the *Daily News* and the *Standard* seem occasionally to disagree with one another; but these differences of opinion are confined within upper and middle class limits, and are therefore only those of a section of the nation. If an upper or middle class orator speaks—provided he is conventional—they give his opinions the utmost prominence or support. But how does the man fare who is representative of working class thought and aspiration; that is to say, who is representative of the majority? We know that he is rarely reported, or if so, obscurely, and is mostly misrepresented. Indeed, the treatment of working class leaders in this respect is scandalous. Whenever they are noticed by "respectable" journalists, it is with sneer and sarcasm; whatever they say wise is suppressed, but the foolish word goes the round of all the drawing-rooms in the land. On the other hand, if Lord Derby makes one of his optimist speeches (let me remark in parenthesis that it is easy for Lord Derby to be an optimist), the entire daily press gloats over it for a week; Lord Salisbury makes another, and we have leader after leader. I suppose that no peer, however obscure he may be as a man, ever appears upon a public platform without having his platitudes reported at length. A Bishop's Charge will command two columns;

but how much space is awarded to the dissenting minister's address? and the same favouritism is shown in the accounts of public meetings. An upper class meeting or a middle class meeting, especially if a peer or a bishop can be obtained for the chair, receives ample report. It is assumed to be a representative national meeting, and Ministers frequently shape the character of their next Bill according to its views. But who can recall an occasion when a fair, honest, and sufficiently prominent report has been given of a radical meeting, notwithstanding that thousands of working men have attended it, and possibly the welfare of several million homes of labouring parents and suffering children have depended upon the effect it produced? Let me remind you as an illustration of the truth of my charge—of the treatment which the Education question recently received at the hands of the "National" daily press.

Its Treatment of Education Question.

This question was one which, it must be admitted, particularly concerned the working classes. It ought almost to have been decided by a parliament of working men: the object of an Education Act being to deal with the children

(not of the upper or middle class) but of the labouring class. Now this class pronounced its wish with singular unanimity and precision. In all the great towns—that is to say in all places where there is intelligence and independence among working men—large meetings were held by them demanding compulsory education, compulsory School Board management, and compulsory unsectarianism: but these meetings were either never reported or were reduced to insignificance by obscure type. I myself was present at two of the largest meetings that have ever been held in London where the working men were met to formulate their demands—the one at St. James's and the other at Exeter Hall. There was no Minister present at either of them to ascertain the wishes of the class whom the approaching legislation was intended to affect. The only means of their communication lay through the daily press: and the daily press hardly vouchsafed to notice them. I remember hearing at the same critical period that Mr. Mill was going to make a speech on the Education question at the Society of Arts Room, and turning with eagerness on the following day to the daily newspaper for a report of his words, I looked in vain. There was in one or two papers a brief reference to his appearance with a scanty abridgement of his remarks, but the prin-

cipal journals were too much engaged in spreading their usual saleable wares of sporting and stock-jobbing news, their theatrical and foreign gossip, university boat race odds, Hurlingham pigeon match handicaps, sensational divorce cases, and last domestic grievance, to spare even a corner for the words of England's greatest political thinker upon a question affecting the fate of some two million neglected and helpless children[1]. As the result of this contemptuous indifference to a unanimous working class demand and to the highest representative thought, we have Mr. Forster's hybrid Education Act—as contemptuous a piece of class legislation as has ever been perpetrated by a Liberal government—giving, like so many stones to the people, permissive compulsion, permissive school boards, and permissive sectarianism! an Act which I have no hesitation in saying has betrayed the cause of national education, and sacrificed the rights and welfare of a whole generation of children.

[1] The death of a dog called Master Magrath has recently received more space than was allotted, on the occasion I refer to, to Mr. Mill.

Proposals to counteract the Influence of the Daily Press.

It may seem to some that the obvious remedy for the unfairness and class character of existing daily journalism is to start a daily Radical organ. But a daily organ is the product of wealth and leisure; and the class which is without representation in the daily press, although the most numerous, is without wealth and without leisure. Some £60,000 or £70,000 are necessary to start a London daily paper. Then, to ensure its success, a large daily subscription must be secured, and a heavy contribution by means of advertisements. These three requisites are entirely wanting. Where is the capital to come from in the first instance? Secondly, working men cannot afford to pay sixpence a week for a newspaper, and genuine radicals, in the paying class, find themselves in too sad a minority to be able to furnish the necessary contingent of readers. Finally, the advertisement fund would be entirely wanting; as advertisements, especially the most paying ones, are exclusively addressed to capitalists witn money to invest. Is it likely that even if working men could afford to subscribe sixpence a week, many of them would be found with spare cash to invest in a Peruvian gold mine, or in

schemes for irrigating the plains of Madras, or supplying water to towns in the Argentine republic?

The remedy proposed is an impracticable one. The only means of counteracting the insidious effect of a class daily press is to denounce the hollowness of its pretension to represent national opinion, and to expose its true character as that of the mere creature of a powerful section. It might be thought that some counteracting influence to a misrepresentative daily press would be afforded by means of the weekly journals; and this is partly the case, but, unfortunately, we find that the weekly newspapers of one class are carefully avoided by the newspaper readers of another class, and, were it not so, there is no comparison between the power of the weekly and the daily press. It is no exaggeration to say that the readers of the *Saturday Review* would hardly condescend to take up *Reynolds' Newspaper* or the *National Reformer* with a pair of tongs[1]. It is true

[1] The newspapers, possessing power, which have probably done more than any others to create distrust and hatred between classes are the *Standard*, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *Saturday Review*, and *Reynolds' Newspaper*. The first named of these may be said to gain its livelihood principally by the incessant abuse it pours upon all reformers, who receive the confidence of the thoughtful portion of the working classes. There is no attempt to veil this abuse; it is, when the occasion may seem to

that the *Bee-hive* is to be found sometimes lying scornfully on the table of a St. James's Street Club, and that it is permitted, as a great favour, to decorate the book-stalls of the railways, but I fear that its readers are few. Now I beg you will not misunderstand me, and imagine that I propose people should be compelled, by Act of Parliament, to read newspapers which they don't like. I have referred to this subject only because I am anxious to point out one of the principal causes of social antagonism[1]. The mischievous

require, coarse enough and malignant enough to satisfy the dullest egotist in the country. It never states an opponent's view fairly, but twists it into something extremely repugnant to the ordinary self-complacent Englishman, and then proceeds to trample triumphantly upon the phantasm of its own creation. For a strange episode in the history of the *Standard*, see Appendix IV. The *Pall Mall Gazette* and the *Saturday Review* deal in cynical sneers at all earnest thought and efforts at progress. The political articles of the former (in contradistinction to its literary articles) are written with all the vigour of a newly acquired aristocratic taste, and those of the latter with the supercilious *hauteur* of a political *blasé*. A favourite device, adopted and rendered fashionable by these journals, is to bracket together the names of certain detested reformers, and add "& Co." (the "Co." being highly significant), presenting them thus as a contemptible firm of agitators, fit to receive only the kicks and reprobation of a well-bred public. *Reynolds* seems to think it is impossible an upper class man can be respectable.

[1] Notwithstanding this explicit statement the *Bradford Daily Telegraph* in reviewing my Lecture was unscrupulous enough to

effect of the class journalism from which we suffer is that the governing classes, who have almost supreme power in legislation, are kept in a state of profound ignorance as to the tendency of thought and aspiration on the part of the governed,—this ignorance arising from the delusive notion that the daily press comprehends national opinion.

An Ignorance that is ignored.

Ignorance in the upper and middle classes of the literature and opinions among the working classes, I place as a prime cause of social revolt. It is a more dangerous form of ignorance than any ignorance

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say, "obviously the remedy is to enact that everybody shall take in what papers Captain Maxse prescribes, and be daily examined to ascertain that he has duly read and pondered upon their contents." The whole of the article from which this passage comes is thoroughly characteristic of the easy insolent superficial style in which smart ready writers treat unpopular opinion. "The Social Reformer," this article commences "may be described as one who sees the times are out of joint, but who differs from Hamlet in that he *rejoices* he is born to set them right," &c. &c.—Rejoices!

> "Where but to think, is to be full of sorrow
> And leaden-eyed despair."

And as if every sensible reformer does not feel how insignificant are his efforts to influence the social anarchy which surrounds him.

on the part of the latter because the ignorance is associated with power. I often think that a little compulsory education among the governing classes upon what is called the Social Question, would exercise a most beneficial effect. Considerable pretensions are advanced by what are called "educated" people, because they have learned what their ancestors thought and did a long time ago: this they call knowledge, though it may be accompanied by the densest ignorance as to what is being thought and done now[1]. To them the circumstances of a remote and vanished past are of greater interest than the quickening circumstances of the present. It is my belief that nine average members of parliament out of ten are incapable of giving a fair definition of the terms "Socialist" and "Communist,"[2] and I am sure that daily editors—if we may judge by the lan-

[1] "If there were the smallest attempt made to convert our schools from establishments in which we are taught to know with exactness *what other people thought a long time ago*, to establishments to enable us to think with exactness about *that which we are to do at present*, which persons of modern and bigoted notions think desirable, there would be a chance of obtaining something like scientific education."——*Prof. Huxley.*

"Certaines gens étudient toute leur vie; à la mort ils ont tout appris, excepté à penser."——*Domergue.* *See* also Appendix V.

[2] For the proper translation of Commune and Communist, *see* Appendix VI.

guage of their journals—regard them very much in the light of pickpockets. How many of our peers who inherit the right—a right which is frequently derived from ancestral wrong doing—to make or to mangle our laws, have read a line or at least have mastered a page of Bentham, Mill, Comte, or Herbert Spencer? Do any of them know more than the name of Robert Owen, who is the father of English socialism? That is to say of the system which in the words of Louis Blanc attempts

> " The moral, intellectual, and physical amelioration of the condition of the class the most numerous and the poorest, by the *co-operation* of efforts instead of their antagonism, and by *association* instead of conflict."

Intolerance towards Thinkers.

And in the pride of their ignorance the governing classes will not listen. If a man possessed of earnest independent thought comes forward and says " it appears to me that this evil results from such a cause," attributing a cause other than the conventional superficial one, straightway the Scribes and the Pharisees, the Journalists and the Clergy, the Conservatives, and all the leaders of Use and Wont set upon him as if he were a mad dog. I know from experience that the man who in my

class is confident enough in the destiny of humanity to believe in the value of reform—to believe in the regeneration or even improvement of Society—and who sets himself to act out his belief, is regarded as impracticable, unsafe, and slightly demented. You are all doubtless aware of the scorn with which the philosopher is treated in good society. But if a philosopher means anything, it means a wise man. It is derived from the Greek words Philos (loving), Sophia (wisdom). It is of course a very disagreeable thing for people who are ignorant to be opposed by philosophers. They are reduced to the dilemma of either having to confess their ignorance, or of ridiculing wisdom and pooh-poohing philosophers. It need hardly be said that they resort to the latter device. There is no man more generally pooh-poohed among respectable people than Mr. Mill. He is a philosopher who has taken part in politics. It would not matter so much if he had only written books which the vulgar never read (Mr. Herbert Spencer can be regarded with equanimity for the reason that he confines his ideas to the closet, though they are probably more revolutionary[1] than Mr. Mill's); but Mr. Mill has had the temerity to give expression on public platforms to political

[1] See "Social Statics," chapter ix, "The Right to the use of the Earth."

convictions corresponding with his high philosophic views. The odd thing is that people who are supposed to be well read, and who glibly quote political economy are very angry with Mr. Mill's views upon the land question, and other subjects, just as if these views were quite new, instead of having been embodied years ago in his volumes of political economy. But for the brilliant thinker who dares to come forward as a social reformer, no abuse can be too venomous, and apparently no means are too unscrupulous, in order to discredit him as an authority. A "high class" journal like the *Saturday Review*, informs its readers[1] that Mr. Mill is a teacher of anarchy to "illiterate brawlers," and he is told that he "unsettles the foundations of government and society." Yet while this is said, it is amusing to note how enlightened, discriminating, and sensible a populace is considered which makes no effort to think at all, but blindly believes everything it is told. We hear nothing of their illiterate condition.

Then that scholarly and exalted teacher the *Quarterly Review*, in a recent number, dishonestly misrepresents[2] Mr. Mill's views in order to

[1] See article "Anarchy and its teachers," June 10th, 1871.

[2] The misrepresentation consists in stating (see *Quarterly Review* for October, 1871) that Mr. Mill, speaking on behalf of the

damage him in the eyes of the public, and betrays its ignorance of his writing, by accusing him, and another unpalatable exponent of rising thought, Mr. F. Harrison, of proposing that the possession of individual property shall cease: whereas, among all reformers there is no greater upholder of the rights of private property (limited by the rights of others) than Mr. Mill, while Mr. Harrison as an uncompromising Positivist, places the right of unlimited private property (the holders of which are however to be made sensible of the duties of pro-

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Land Tenure Reform Association, would "insist upon the *compulsory* purchase (of land) where the landowner declined to surrender *all interest in the future increase* of the value of his land." But Mr. Mill only claims the right of the State to *tax* the unearned increase of value; he would leave to the owner "the full enjoyment of whatever value he adds to the land by his own exertions and improvement." Then he says: "If, rather than submit to be specially taxed on the future increase of his rent, a landowner prefers to relinquish his land to the State, the society are willing that the State should pay for it at its selling value. By this provision, anyone who has purchased land on the faith of its rising in price, will, *at his option*, recover from the State, not only the capitalised value of the rent he actually receives, but whatever he may have paid for the prospect of future increase."—*Programme of the Land Tenure Reform Association. Explanatory Statement by John S. Mill.* A more unscrupulous mis-statement than this one of the *Quarterly Reviewer* it would be difficult to produce.

prietorship) as the first condition of the ideal society he labours to establish[1].

Look at the ignorant onslaught which has been recently made upon Sir Charles Dilke for a few bold words upon the Civil List and the cost of the Crown. At Bolton, the Conservatives and "Respectables" instigated a "loyal" mob, of course not an "illiterate" one, to an assault upon him and his meeting; and one poor man, William Schofield, was killed by a "constitutional" brickbat. Mark the yells with which Mr. Auberon Herbert was greeted in the first assembly of "gentlemen" in the world. Witness the intolerance with which such men as Professor Beesly, the late Mr. Ernest Jones, Mr. Beales, Mr. Bradlaugh, and Mr. Odger have

[1] Dr. Bridges, one of the most able exponents of the Positivist creed, says, in a letter addressed last year to the *Spectator*:—"To us the concentration of wealth in a small number of holders is absolutely necessary to its efficiency. With some exceptions, as in the case of English land, it is too much dispersed, we think, even now. What we desire is to create an atmosphere of opinion in which the possessors of wealth shall be regarded and shall regard themselves as social functionaries, their functions being first to regulate production so that the existing amount of wealth may somewhat more than reproduce itself, and secondly, to see that a share of wealth sufficient to permit healthy life falls to the lot of the producer."

been invariably treated. Society, monopolising the press, and ignoring them on the platform, has never condescended to ascertain what it is they have to say. They are all labelled "dangerous men." This is a convenient epithet, for it implies that those who use it are the "safe" men, and alarms the women and children. There may, however, be two opinions, as to what constitutes a "dangerous" man. For my part, I consider the most "dangerous" men are those who persistently maintain under varying circumstances social systems which promote misery, and doom several million human beings to lives of lingering death.

The effect of Political Deafness.

The inevitable result of sealing up all channels for the communication of ideas between classes is, that the excluded class adopts in despair a separate and determined policy of its own. Suddenly, the comfortable public are startled by the information that a republican movement is afoot. It was amusing to note the wild floundering of our daily instructors when they were called upon to account for this strange prodigy—a monster upon the English soil. The common explanation

given by them was, that the people had been driven to despair in consequence of having been deprived for so many years of the gratifying spectacle of royal pageantry. One Journal gravely declared that they loved even to be splashed by the mud of a royal carriage. Such explanations were the result of ignorance. The republican movement arose entirely because a number of active members of the working-class became hopeless (especially after the election of the present House of Commons) of obtaining redress for social wrong under the exclusive system I have described, and—rightly or wrongly—challenged, as the head, front, and symbol of this remorseless system—the monarchical form of government.

When the insurrection in Paris broke out, Society fell into a state of mingled horror and amazement, at the *obscurity* of the men who headed it. The angry question was everywhere asked,—" Who are these obscure men ? "

The reply may be stated as follows :—" They are the representatives, more or less honest, and more or less wise, of a change of thought, as well as of a vast irrepressible human hope which you Society conspire to suppress, and render revolutionary in its worse sense. You refuse to hear any thought but your own, and your own thought

notwithstanding all the talent you press into its service, represents merely the stationary point of view, or what may be termed the decomposing element in civilization. You have an exclusive press, an exclusive platform[1], and an exclusive electoral system. You wield the entire educational machinery of the country, taking the helpless children from their very cradles, and teaching them that the divine faculty of thought—the antidote to human misfortune—is a danger and a snare. You teach them that the human race is degenerate instead of regenerate. You give them, as heroes, the men who have been most successful in human slaughter, and, as outcasts, all men of liberal progressive ideas. Then, having thus tampered with childhood, you endeavour to extinguish ideas

[1] The platform is exclusive in one or two ways. First of all, it is highly expensive. To hire a great hall and advertise a meeting properly can hardly be done for less than £25. This sum is but a trifling consideration to the promoters of an upper or middle class meeting; but 1,500 working men would have to subscribe 4*d.* a piece to produce the amount. Notwithstanding this obvious disadvantage under which they suffer, proposals are not wanting to suppress the right of open air meeting. If this were done the right of public meeting would be confined to moneyed men.

The above argument is based upon the supposition that what are called Public Halls are impartially at the service of all parties offering to hire them. This, however, is not the case. It was

in manhood, and banish from your national council every man whose thought leads to radical change. Look at the treatment Mazzini and Garibaldi, Victor Hugo, Delescluze, and Jacoby have received at the hands of the dominant society in their respective countries, to say nothing of the host of sturdy reformers in our own.[1] And then—having fastened up your ears, and defied nature—you are surprised, astonished, and indignant that "obscure" men, who are "none of them known," complained the *Times* newspaper, are to be found leading an iron revolt,—a revolt which you society have by your insupportable system, rendered almost unavoidable."

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decided not long ago by the directors of the Freemason's Tavern Company, as well as by the proprietors of other large London halls, in reply to an application for their use by the promoters of the Free Speech Demonstration, that the working classes are not to have a public hall for the expression of their views. Add to the proprietors' prohibition a prohibition to meet in Hyde Park or Trafalgar Square, and the "public platform," as far as the working classes are concerned, is effectually suppressed. It may be added, as a further illustration of the exclusive system, that Town Halls are frequently refused for the purpose of holding Radical meetings.

[1] It may not be amiss to remark the favour with which a reformer is regarded when he is incapacitated by age or sickness and has ceased to represent active movement. When he is quite

The Antagonism of Town and Country.

Another cause of social revolt, and one which may be said to have been the most instrumental in producing the Paris insurrection, is the antagonism of political force, which—partly from natural causes, but partly from State dereliction of duty—is developed between the town and country populations. Intelligence and independent thought spread rapidly in towns where men have a common interest, and can meet to compare their opinions and wishes; but in the country, where they are isolated, benumbed by out-door physical toil, and have their minds appropriated from infancy by the clergy, there is no chance of an independent judgment being formed. What the state of the French peasantry is, we are informed by a dis-

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the phantom of his former self and is no longer at war with social injustice we hear

> "The world applaud the hollow ghost
> Which blamed the living man."

Mr. Bright, who has been a noble reformer in his time, now occupies this unfortunate position, and, according to the daily press, everyone is ready to listen to his opinion. It is my opinion that one hundred years hence Mr. Mill will be exhumed as a Conservative authority. Mazzini's body was hardly cold before the leading Conservative organ carried its hypocritical homage to the man, whom living, it had slandered and traduced.

tinguished writer, M. Taine. He tells us that the rural population of his country amounts to seventy per cent. of the total population,—fourteen electors out of twenty,—and then says "in France, out of 100 persons of the male sex, there are 39 illiterate, that is, unable to read or write. As these almost all belong to the rural population, that gives this population 39 illiterate out of 70. Thus one is not far wrong in estimating the number of rural electors, who do not possess the first rudiments of the most elementary instruction at half the total." He adds, "Government, they endure or accept, like cold in winter or heat in summer, as something fated to be their superior. Overthrown, restored, replaced, revived, it matters not to them; for them it is always much the same."

Now, this large helpless rural population, without any intelligence or will of its own, becomes easily, from the circumstances of its position, a blind instrument in the hands of the clergy and landowners, who use it unscrupulously to oppose the liberal aspirations of town populations. This is the power by means of which the Republic of 1848, was betrayed; it is the same power which sustained the French Empire against the wishes of the towns, authorised the war, provoked the rebellion, and now by means of its rural Assembly[1], holds

1 See Appendix VII.

the intelligence and destiny of France in its deadly grip. All the town aspirations of France go towards a republic, and aim to establish a higher state of society than the present one; but the votes of the priest-ridden and ignorant peasantry may be depended upon at any moment to stifle them, and restore the old monarchical and imperial systems of misrule which between them have held sway over France for so many centuries, and have reduced her to her present condition[1]. And then it is wondered that the towns rebel! There is not so much antagonism between town and country populations in England, as there is in France; and yet it may be said that all the impulse to progress in this country has been received from the town, and all the obstruction has been supplied by the counties. The only method of counteracting the divergence of aim between town and country is by establishing a universal system of National Secular[2] Education. This the state has failed to do in either France or England. Mr. Forster's Act, applying as it does only to towns, and abandoning the rural population to its ignorance and retrograde influences,

[1] See Appendix VIII.

[2] The Clergy compel us to use the term Secular, because they demand theological teaching, disguised under the name of "Religion," as part of a system of National Education.

threatens to create a breach as wide as that which exists in France.

The Cry of Atheist.

There is one particular feature in the present controversy upon which I desire to remark, and while I do so I must beseech your utmost tolerance and forbearance. It is the religious bigotry with which Social Reformers are assailed. The subject is a delicate one to handle. If I approach it, it is because there is lodged beneath it a mine of combustible material, which is of the utmost danger to the community. The history of the Paris revolt has taught us that people will still kill one another for a religious difference of opinion with the same fanatical self-complacency as the Crusaders did, when, in the words of their paragon, Godfrey of Bouillon, they triumphantly "splashed the vile blood of the Saracens up to the knees of their horses."

If men once get the idea into their heads that they represent God, and that their adversaries represent the devil (a most convenient assumption) all the higher virtues, such as justice, compassion, generosity and forbearance, become extinguished. There is no need to recapitulate the fearful massacres which have been perpetrated in history for

the honour and glory of God. We saw last year the merciless vindictiveness with which a powerful and triumphant monarch wantonly prolonged a war, the legitimate objects of which had been attained, chiefly because he regarded himself as an instrument in the hands of God, and that it pleased Providence he should punish the wicked foe. Then the scenes are fresh on our memory which have still later occurred, during that terrible week in May, when an ignorant soldiery entered Paris, on behalf of religion and order, and rioted in the bloodshed of Paris workmen and their families, while the clerical journals hounded them on to massacre; and one of them indignantly demanded why only 40,000 Communists had been killed! And nothing apparently tended so much to brutalise and harden the hearts of the Versailles party in the performance of their merciless task, as the declaration that their antagonists were atheists.

Now, it is necessary to say aloud positively and distinctly that there is no such thing as an atheist according to the popular interpretation of this term. It is merely an opprobrious epithet which we fasten on those whose religious views differ from our own[1]. The Archbishop of Canterbury is just

[1] See Appendix IX.

as much an atheist to Mr. Bradlaugh as Mr. Bradlaugh is one to the Archbishop of Canterbury. There is between them but a difference of human opinion.[1] It is mere want of reflection which prevents our seeing that the man called an atheist only disbelieves in God as a *human term* for the Unknown[2]; he only rejects, as far as I can make out, a human explanation, or what to him is a human explanation, of the Unknowable. Into this unfathomable and unapproachable region he declares presumptuous people have entered and set

[1] At the beginning of this year the Bishop of Orleans resigned his seat in the French Academy, giving as his reason that M. Littré, an "Atheist," had been elected. Here again however the Bishop is just as much an atheist to the order of thought represented by M. Littré, as M. Littré is to the Bishop. Which position is the most presumptuous? The Bishop declares that he is God, or what is tantamount to the same, that he embodies and represents God; therefore he, the Bishop, is infallible. M. Littré on the other hand does not profess to have special knowledge about God or concerning the unknowable: he confines his enquiry within the limits of the known and therein contrives to found a substantial Belief. To this belief, the Bishop remains an infidel.

[2] I am perfectly aware that in saying this I render myself liable to be charged by unjust or ignorant people with defending atheism. I do nothing of the sort, for I have never been able to appreciate the position of an atheist. I merely say that he is as much entitled to have his religious belief (Archbishop Whateley has truly said that no man can disbelieve without *believing*) respected as the most credulous Christian.

up an image upon which they cast the responsibility of their own audacious errors. It does not matter what term a man applies to his belief, whether he designates it God, the "Better," or the "Higher." The men against whom all our prejudices are aroused because they are called atheists, infidels, or free-thinkers, are not without their religious belief, and in Paris they have given their lives in attestation of its sincerity. It is probable that when Millière expired under a military volley, exclaiming "*Vive l'Humanité*," he was as sublimely conscious of dying for a great cause as was the unfortunate Archbishop of Paris, who, pardoning his executioners, declared that he died for the truth. These French leaders believed in the Better or Higher. Is not this what some of us mean when we speak of "God?" What they disbelieved in was "Wrong" as an invincible power. Is not this again what most of us mean by the "Devil?" The terms that are used to express lofty aspirations signify nothing. They only betray the poverty of human language to express thought. Sufficient that there is the lofty aspiration.

Let me digress here for a moment to say that I should be sorry to mislead you into supposing that because I defend the Paris leaders from an ignorant calumny, I approve of the Paris insur-

rection. I regretted it from the outset. It always appeared to me to be a reckless, and even criminal proceeding; it was hardly less criminal than the war which the governing classes of France entered into against Germany. Those who organised it were not even agreed upon the institutions they desired to establish. Even if they had succeeded, their success could only have been temporary; and, encountering failure, they have materially strengthened the reactionary forces of Europe. Lastly, I do not believe in violence as a solution of the social problem.

Not only in France, however, but in every country in Europe, England included, the clergy are constantly endeavouring to inflame the minds[1] of their too credulous congregations with religious bigotry and hatred against Social Reformers, many of whom in their conflict with the deified ignorance of the past, and the deified selfishness of the present, have taken to themselves a new creed apparently subversive of the old. They may console themselves by knowing that there never was yet a great religious reformer who has not at one time or another been assailed by the cowardly and ignorant epithet to which I have

[1] One of the greatest culprits in this respect is Mr. Spurgeon; see a passage from a recent discourse of his, Appendix X.

referred.[1] The reason of this is, that the religious element in human nature is happily indestructible, confined to no age, but struggling up in elemental purity, disdainful of tradition and dogma, constantly assuming a revolutionary form, as was Christ in his age[2]—devoted, absorbed, and passionate—lifting the souls of men to a higher ideal, traduced and slandered as Atheist by conventional thought, and yet renewing ever that divine thirst for a better world, without which the destiny of the human race were imperilled.

This protest brings me to a consideration of the two creeds which lie at the root of all political and social argument; the antagonism of which furnishes one of the most active causes of social revolt.

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[1] "The hackneyed and lavished title of blasphemer should be welcome to all who recollect on *whom* it was originally bestowed. Socrates and Jesus Christ were put to death publicly as blasphemers, and so have been, and may be, many who dare to oppose the most notorious abuses of God and the mind of man."—*Lord Byron.*

[2] "We don't know Jesus, and no man would know him if he came to-day. We imagine that he was a respectable, sentimental, decorous, moderate, careful conservative element, who took a hall and was decently surrounded. He was the sedition of the streets. He arraigned unjust power at its own feet. If a man does so now we send him to the Coventry of public contempt.

The Rival Creeds.

If I were asked to give a short definition of the two religious creeds which now struggle for mastery, I should say that the one represented a belief in the Past, and that the other represented a belief in the Future. According to the one, man *descends;* according to the other, he *ascends.* The first theory represents Paradise and the perfect high being, as having existed some six thousand years ago; but the Paradise was lost, and the degraded being continues to survive as a fallen creature, incapable of radical improvement in a lost world, and only sustained in his miserable lot by the hope of attaining immortal individual life, by means of prayer, prostration and the Church. The opposite theory contends that man emerged from a lower race of wild savage, and slowly developed his present mental stature, in the lapse of countless ages—ages representing a period which science has variously estimated at from 20,000 years to one quarter of a million years, and that as modern man may look back with satisfaction so far, he is entitled to look forward

But that is where Christianity goes. That is the way it entered the world, and that is the way it grapples the world to-day."—*Christianity; a Battle, not a Dream. A Discourse by Wendell Phillips.*

to the higher goal in the future. He compares himself with his rough progenitor, the expiring type of which is still to be found in remote countries, whose life was a mere struggle with ferocious fellow creatures, and notes the vast stride which has been made: or, for a still more vivid contrast, he travels in imagination back to the Silurian age (how long ago this was, no man dare say)[1], when the highest inhabitant of this splendid globe was a slug, and placing by the side of this slimy creature even semi-civililized man, he requires no Diviner confirmation than is conveyed in the comparison, of those

> "August anticipations, symbols, types
> Of a dim splendour ever on before."

These two creeds have become insensibly identified with political parties. The conservative religion is that there is a better world to come, but it is a world beyond the grave. The democratic faith is, subordinating transcendental speculations, that a better world may be obtained on earth. They have also become identified with classes. Those who are in easy circumstances are mostly sceptical, or, at least, indifferent, upon

[1] It has been calculated that 9,000,000 years were necessary to form the seam of a Northumberland coal basin. Yet this period is but as a minute of modern history when contrasted with the preceding Silurian and Devonian ages.

the subject of human progress. But no sooner is thought kindled in the proletariate class, than a belief in human progress becomes an actuating principle. French working men especially seem to have taken away their faith in the redress of wrongs after death, and have given it with religious fervour to the creation of a better world below. The difference of creeds between classes is easily accounted for. To people who are in a prosperous condition, unless they happen to imbibe broad humanitarian views, the advantage of change is by no means obvious. They have their attention solely fixed upon the benefits of a partial civilization. Hence they are optimists. It is not strange, however, that the working classes, who experience the evils of partial civilization, should believe in the possibility of its completion.

Whatever, though, may be the motives which instigate the two creeds, I would ask any impartial person whether there can be any question as to the respective value—from a practical point of view—of these rival beliefs? I have sometimes endeavoured to realize the frame of mind possessed by people who disbelieve in human progress, and have always found myself entering gloom. The idea seems to me so utterly dismal that this wondrous planet, with its infinite and marvellous capacity for beautiful human life, can have

fulfilled its destiny in producing a series of imperfect civilizations, concluding with the present one.

> "If this were thus, if this, indeed, were all,
> Better the narrow brain, the stony heart,
> The staring eye glazed o'er with sapless days,
> The long mechanic pacing to and fro,
> The set gray life, and apathetic end."

What do the optimists, or rather the pessimists think? Do they think that humanity, having toiled its way so far from barbarism—humanity with its lofty aspirations and unutterable longings for peace and love—is to come to a full stop? We may all differ as to how the higher and the better is to be obtained—as to how to extend happiness and how to abate misery, but to deny the possibility of calling in the millions to the blessings of civilization, in the presence of beneficent inexhaustible Nature and the inexhaustible mind of man, seems to me the rankest blasphemy and resignation to the reign of the Devil.

There can surely be no question as to the merit of a belief in the possibility of human improvement. Our common sense tells us that if we believe a thing can be done, it is more likely to be accomplished than if we believe it cannot be done[1].

[1] "He who cannot be taught to despair is better than the man who cannot be taught to hope—is better than the man whom no success ever inspires with confidence."—*Rev. Sidney Smith (Canon of St. Paul's).*

The man who constructs his ideal upon this world is more likely to benefit it than the man who relegates it to an unknown region. And human progress is entirely due to our sense of the ideal. We perceive our imperfection according to our sense of the perfect. We improve not only individually, but collectively, according to our feeling of what *might* be. The injurious effects of non-belief in human progress are many. It hardens the heart of the most humane among the rich, and fills the poor with despair. It promotes selfishness; for it sends the individual, unless he be of a deeply religious nature capable of finding solace in the exercise of philanthropy, or of practising a refined Christianity within the given conditions of society, to the pursuit of private gain. The private life point of view — over the narrow boundary of which so many people are incapable of looking—predominates. For if nothing can be done to mend the lot of the many (urges average human nature in the moneyed class), we may as well enjoy ourselves; and the first condition of private enjoyment is to maintain things as they are, and, above all things, to maintain an unlimited class of inferiors to minister to our wants. Thus, what may be termed the Despotism of Luxury is installed. Every view is regarded as a dangerous one which does not include a complete programme for

preserving intact the conditions of luxurious living[1].

I have found numbers of really good and amiable people sorely exercised as to how, under the altered circumstances of an improved society, the race of shoeblacks is to be preserved. All their sympathies, however humane they may be, appear to founder upon this consideration. Lord Derby, the great upper class representative, virtually said this, when a few months ago he expressed his fear that if education were given to all there would be none left to discharge the inferior duties of life. As if it were a part of the creed of genuine reformers, that work, however menial, is a degradation! And as if, under a more decent condition of society, we shall not devise convenient means for securing a polish to our boots, even though shoeblacks are no longer preserved as a caste.

But dread of change is the first instinct of thoughtless or of selfish people. They always anticipate some calamity from movement. Their hack quotation is, that it is better to bear

> "Those ills we have
> Than fly to others that we know not of,"

though they omit to remind their hearers that these lines can only be quoted against proposals

[1] See Appendix XI.

of progress by perverting Shakespeare's original meaning: as he was distinctly speaking of the "ills" which may be encountered after death. Their favourite metaphor is—and there is nothing more misleading to ignorant people—that Society needs a "drag:" thereby taking for granted that we are all bound downward instead of upward. Then there are various little sedative maxims highly consolatory to people provided with the means of personal enjoyment and comfort. "Whatever is is right," "Leave well alone," &c. &c. Their condition is one of material activity and spiritual slumber. They may be likened to the people we are told of, who, in ancient times, sought oblivion of their country and the cares of life, by eating the intoxicating lotos berry, and who cried

"Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
* * * * *
We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge was seething free.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like gods together, careless of mankind."

While I say this I am willing to admit that there are very active administrators among the

stationary party; but the principles which they adminstrate are those of a dormant society, solely animated by traditional feeling, and sceptical of the value of human effort for more than the preservation of that mixed heritage of bad and good which we have received from our ancestors. Their cardinal error is that they mix up and confuse two classes of circumstance—the unavoidable and the avoidable—those which form part of the inexorable external circumstances of Nature, and those which are arranged by the error or selfishness of men. The thunder from Heaven and the crime upon earth are accepted as equally ordained and inevitable. Hence defiance of change, defiance of Thought, and a fatalist creed!

We hold, on the other hand, that a large portion of human misery is preventible. We do not advocate, as the libel goes, change for the sake of change, but we advocate what we believe to be wise change, for the purpose of remedying avoidable evil. We do not anticipate as the result of this change, that mankind will straightway enter upon the millennium; but we hold with Bacon, that "it is madness and a contradiction to suppose that an end which has never yet been attained" (and the end in view of reformers is the well-being of the majority) "can be achieved otherwise than

by means hitherto untried." It is not that we want anarchy—but order: for to the man with a high sense of order, and with a high sense of justice, the present state of society, though its ruin is cloaked by a superficial prosperity, is one of anarchy[1]. It is not that we desire to demolish authority, but to establish it. Authority, however, founded upon reason, not authority founded upon superstition and class prejudice. Reason is the product of thought. If we are not governed by thought we shall be governed by ignorance, and ignorance means injustice and suffering. The penalty of not thinking appears to be that we must kill one another, either directly or indirectly. Hence foreign wars and social misery.

Thought is the great dissolvent of error and inertia. It is a process of Nature for invigorating social systems, with which it is as idle to be angry as it would be to be angry with the presence of oxygen in the air, and like oxygen it requires, in order to preserve an atmosphere of health, the freest circulation: if we isolate and compress it, it becomes an explosive gas. Finally, we have faith in human nature. We believe in the growth,

[1] The statement has been made, which no one will venture to contradict, that a single bargain on the Stock Exchange will realize more than 30,000 needlewomen in London could earn in two years at their present wages.

under civilising conditions, of the human conscience – (the derivation of which may be left to metaphysicians)—that is to say, of a sense of good as distinguished from evil[1]. This conscience we may cultivate, neglect, or even extinguish by means of theological dogma and intimidation. In proportion to its vigour and cultivation it yearns to the light, struggling, striving, wrestling for the higher state—for the better condition of man.

Such is the rival creed, imperfectly expressed. As soon as it becomes a fixed spiritual creed in the souls of men, we shall advance: hardly with perception before. For as that noble thinker, Mr. Goldwin Smith truly remarked, "Institutions, antiquated and decayed, may fall or be pulled down; but humanity can advance to a new order of things only when it is borne forward on the wings of a new faith. And," he added, in reproach of the French excesses of the first revolution, "not a step

[1] "If it were necessary to choose between the lot of a bad but rich man, and that of a virtuous but unfortunate one, I should not hesitate. Why is the choice so easy? Does it not come from the persuasion that there is no bad man but who has often wished to be good, and that no good man ever wished to be wicked"—*Diderot.*

"There is in our heart of hearts an innate principle of justice and of virtue upon which we judge our own actions and those of others; and it is to this principle that we give the name of conscience."—*Rousseau.*

will be made towards the attainment of a new faith by guillotining all the tyrants and oligarchs in the world."

I have now submitted for your consideration what appear to me to be some of the principal causes which lead to social revolt. I cannot, however, conclude without offering you, as briefly as possible, my advice, for what it may be worth, as to the policy which it behoves you to adopt in order to counteract these mischievous influences: and here I address myself particularly to working men as the class most concerned in human progress. Some simple, uninstructed working man, stunned by the whirling machinery of dominant wealthy society, and bewildered by the number of doctrines presented for his acceptance, may possibly be here, and may well ask, "What am I to do?"

Remedial Policy.

I would first say to working men, organise yourselves socially. When you belong to trades which are represented by Unions—join these Unions. It is only by this means that you can place yourselves in a strong enough position to obtain equitable terms from your employers. One of the greatest and most valuable triumphs ever achieved by

your order has recently been obtained at Newcastle, where, by means of an admirably managed strike, the hours of labour have been reduced from ten hours to nine hours. I hope that before many years are over they will be reduced to eight hours. Doubtless Trades' Unions have often committed errors; but, on the whole, I think they have been wisely managed, and have done more to fortify the working class than any other existing institution. Under the remorseless competitive system the weakest go to the wall. Your sole refuge lies in combination; for combined you are powerful, but divided you are weak.

There is, however, a movement in progress which threatens to supersede the competitive system entirely. I refer to the Co-operative Movement. I have no very ardent sympathy with Co-operation as far as it enables wealthy people to save a shilling or two upon their groceries, but I have the deepest sympathy with the movement as far as it enables workers to share in the profits of their production; and this is the result of the industrial partnerships, and Co-operative factories, and stores which exist in the North. Were it not for the hope which is offered in this movement, I consider that our social prospects would be gloomy indeed. By means of it we may look confidently into the future. I believe that it

is not less to the interest of employers than to the employed to welcome this pacifying agent. It was stated not long since, at a Social Science discussion which I attended, that none of the workmen who belonged to Co-operative establishments in Paris joined the insurrection. These men had discovered a satisfactory solution of the social problem. There are doubtless many present who are familiar with the principle of Co-operation[1]. I cannot, of course, enter upon this at the

[1] For further information on this subject, *see* "On Labour," by W. T. Thornton. Book. iv., chapters 1, 2, and 3. Also the "Co-operative News," published weekly at Manchester.

"By this principle labour becomes its own employer and recompenser; it directs itself, manages itself, subsists itself, and appropriates to itself a just share of the wealth it creates. The Co-operative principle makes the old antagonism a myth. The rulers need not fear the International if they but do justice to the industrial masses. The industrial masses will have no grievances to complain of if they will do justice to themselves. In the co-operative principle both will find safety, and the long, long contest will be reconciled. In this country any man of good habits and average ability can save money. Saved money is capital. The man who earns fifteen dollars a week and saves five of it, is to that extent a capitalist. All capital is savings; a man's own savings or those of his ancestors. Hence every labourer who earns more than he spends is all the while becoming a capitalist. What is it then that keeps the labouring man down and makes him the slave of capital? When it is not his own improvidence, it is his folly. He permits capital to take the lion's share of all production. He is contented to let capital

conclusion of a lecture. All I can do is to commend the system most earnestly to your consideration, and beg you to study some of the marvellous results of it which have been obtained by workmen in the North.

Add to your social organisation, political organisation. Do not be misled by the foolish cry which is frequently raised against politics and "party" movement. People who do not care for politics do not care for their fellow creatures. We cannot escape politics, if we have brains and heart, any more than we can escape differences of opinion. Politics is a term which covers the great controversy as to the proper function of government and the individual right which is entitled to State protection. It is true that within your own lives, to some of you it may appear that you have not profited much by politics. If this is the case, it is because you have not had adequate political representation. Still you have profited to some extent, for without politics—that is to say, with-

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build a house for him to live in. He is content to pay a monthly tribute to capital for the privilege of a shelter, when by co-operation he could make this monthly tribute, or rent, take the shape of an instalment of the purchase price of a house. Every member of a judiciously organized co-operation association is in fair way of becoming a capitalist himself."—*The Enterprise and Co-operator.*

out legislative action (by means of which the combination laws were repealed and the Limited Liability Act was passed)—you could not avail yourselves of either Trades Unions or Co-operation. And "party" in politics is but a term for organisation. If two people have the same object in view, it is wiser for them to act together—especially when they are confronted by numerous enemies—than to act independently. Of course, corresponding to change of thought and aspiration, parties must dissolve and form into fresh ones. We appear to have reached this point in English politics. I do not know how the thinkers and the workers of England are to carry those measures which they deem to be needful, into effect, unless they organise themselves upon a "platform," as the Americans say, representing their principles. There are, in my opinion, four indispensable measures which should go to the construction of such a platform[1]. These I will shortly state.

[1] In giving this platform it may be necessary to anticipate the usual taunt of off-hand writers and House of Commons politicians by declaring that I do not expect, by means of its adoption to inaugurate the millennium. The utmost effect of the measures advocated will be to produce conditions favourable to progress.

A Platform.

First. (1). Compulsory, gratuitous, secular education[1].

We want to extend intelligence, ideas, and public spirit among the working classes. Even if they entertain, at first, erroneous ideas, it is far better than that they should entertain none at all. Pope uttered a great fallacy when he said

" A little knowledge is a dangerous thing."

All knowledge is relative, and "a little knowledge" is better than blank ignorance. f the working class had more knowledge, its position would be far different from what it is. Education must be

[1] St. Paul's Cathedral, which some people have declared is a National Edifice, has been recently devoted to some highly Conservative teaching upon political and social questions. At one of the lectures given there the Rev. Canon Gregory sneered at the believers in "the natural perfectibility of man." He seems unable to perceive that while the expression of this belief fulfils the part of an elevating religious abstraction or image, its immediate practical effect is to stimulate men to devote themselves to the improvement of the condition of their fellow-creatures; and, to say the least, it bears a favourable companion with the Canon's own creed of "the natural degradation of man." He then challenges reformers to produce *proof* that some scheme of theirs has been successfully tried. But all their schemes are *untried*, since the fulfilment of the first condition of all their schemes,

compulsory, because if a man adds human beings to a civilised community he is bound to bring them up qualified, as far as their natures permit, to enter the condition of such community; for both Society and the child have "rights" needing protection, and if the parent fails to instruct the child—that is to say, fails to graft an intelligent life upon its animal life—Society is entitled to protect itself and to protect the child. Education must be "gratuitous," because the parents already paying for education in rates, should not be called on to pay for it twice over; also because in a country, claiming to be civilized, education should exist as a free natural element, the right to which is inherited by all children as a protection from misery, and a means to livelihood. It must be

Universal Secular Education has never been attempted. "At present," he says, "secular education is the special nostrum proposed." I hope I shall not be regarded as profane if I remark that the Canon is not without a nostrum of his own. It is to "believe in Christ." The world has at least had the benefit of the Canon's proposal for eighteen centuries, and the result is hardly satisfactory. Finally, Canon Gregory endeavoured to impose upon the credulity of his listeners by declaring that secular education, which means the general cultivation of intelligence and morality (*a*), will "make men value wealth and luxury more." How comes it then, that in England, under a jealous denominational system, love of wealth and luxury has become a universal passion?

(*a*) *See* Appendix XII.

"secular," because, while we can agree upon giving humble human knowledge in regard to the Comprehensible, we are very properly disagreed upon the knowledge which it is necessary to give concerning the Incomprehensible.

(2). Land Tenure Reform.

There are at present no laws to regulate the proprietorship, or means of inhabiting the land. The result of this is, in England and Wales, that some 170,000 individuals[1], representing with their families, at the outside, 1,000,000 people, have bought up the whole face of the country, and have been able to exclude from proprietorship and residence th remaining 21,000,000. In consequence of this, men of moderate means, and poor men, are unable to inhabit their country, or to cultivate its lands, and more than half the population has been driven into the already overcrowded towns. Moreover, as a further result of our feudal accumulative system, the agricultural resources remain undeveloped. In a country, conveniently, but fallaciously stated to be over-populated, some 10,000,000 acres of fertile food-growing land re-

[1] I give the approximate number of landowners. It is possible there are 20,000 less than this. The number of landowners 200 years ago, when population was at a fourth of what it is now, was also about 170,000.

main waste[1], after an allowance of 20,000,000 acres as land irreclaimable or desirable to retain in a wild state of natural beauty. To reform the land laws, especially in an old country, the greatest sagacity and moderation are required. A programme of reform has been drawn up, after long and mature deliberation, by the Land Tenure Reform Association, which is composed of some of the most eminent social philosophers, including the names of Mill, Fawcett, Thornton, Hare, Professors Cairnes and Bain, as well as nearly all trusted Radicals and working class politicians, among whom are P. A. Taylor, Sir C. Dilke, Miall, Walter Morrison, Lloyd Jones, G. J. Holyoake, Lucraft, Beales, Odger, Weston, and many others. This programme as compact, and the outcome of much thoughtful discussion, I commend to your support.

(3). The substitution of direct for indirect taxation.

The objections to indirect taxation are, first its cost, and secondly its unfairness. The government expense of collecting our £42,000,000 of indirect taxation amounts to £5,000,000 of money; but this is not all, for the burthen upon tax-payers, in consequence of the mode of levying

[1] For detail upon the subject of waste land, I would refer the reader to an article of mine in the *Fortnightly Review*, August, 1870.

the duty, has been calculated to reach no less than £18,000,000 in addition; of the total £65,000,000 thus arrived at, the working classes unconsciously contribute by taxes upon spirits, malt, tobacco, tea, sugar, and coffee[1], £35,000,000, this proportion being a charge upon their aggregate taxable income far greater than the charge upon the aggregate taxable income of the upper and middle classes. Were it not for the complete fog with which indirect taxation designedly envelopes its real incidence, this crying injustice would never be submitted to[2].

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[1] It has been estimated that out of every shilling paid over the counter, for—

Tea	- - -	4½*d.*	goes to Government.
Sugar	- - -	3*d.*	,, ,,
Cocoa	- - -	2½*d.*	,, ,,
Coffee	- - -	1*d.*	,, ,,

Beyond these charges, there is the additional one derived from the incidental expense attendant upon all indirect taxation.

[2] The cry of plunder is always raised by conventional writers whenever a proposal is made to substitute direct taxation (proportionate to means) for indirect taxation. If, however, this ugly word is to be introduced, the question is whether the rich are to continue to plunder the poor? No one can examine into the incidence of taxation without discovering that such is the case under the present system—that is to say, that the working classes, in proportion to their means, are taxed to a far greater extent than the wealthy classes. Mr. Robert Giffen, an able writer upon finance, goes so far as to declare that the taxation of the working classes is "double that of their richer neighbours." See an interesting table prepared by him, Appendix XIII.

(4). Electoral Representative Reform.

A genuine system of voting by ballot would do something towards this: and if the expenses of election be defrayed at public cost as a public concern, still more will be done; but there remains the object of ensuring the representation of human beings instead of geographical abstractions. Sir Charles Dilke has lately called attention to the shameful character of the present system, pointing out that 20,000 voters in Hackney and 19,000 in Glasgow have the same representation in Parliament as 136 individuals in the pocket borough of Portarlington; and while, on the one hand, 110 members of Parliament sit on behalf of 1,080,000 voters, another 110 members are to be found sitting for 83,000. Again, as an illustration of the unfair character of the present electoral system, it will not be considered an exaggeration to say that at least 2,000,000 thoughtful people in the country would consider themselves best represented in Parliament by Mr. Mill; but the presence of a few hundred electors, or it might be only half a dozen electors, at Westminster, is sufficient to baulk the two million of their desire. Again, it is probable that not less than 3,000,000 artisans in the country wish to be represented by Mr. Odger, whose defeat at Southwark was in all likelihood

secured by three or four influential employers; and, finally, a million or two co-operators may feel themselves entitled to representation, but under the present system it is doubtful whether a single candidate for Parliament suspected of a leaning to co-operation will be again returned to the House. Mr. Walter Morrison has prepared a bill this year based upon Mr. Hare's system, which provides a well-considered remedy[1] for the present flagrant misrepresentation of national thought. The object of the bill is to secure the representation of people instead of the blocks of buildings or acres by which they are surrounded. This is effected first of all by allotting members of Parliament in proportion to population, and secondly, by widening the area of constituencies so as to give parties an opportunity of concentrating their strength upon a chosen representative of their respective principles. Another effect of the scheme will be to render individual electors independent of party managers. This measure, it need hardly be said, will be scornfully rejected by an oligarchic Parliament[2]; nevertheless, it

[1] The equalization of the county and borough franchise is necessary to render this remedy a complete one.

[2] Mr. Morrison's bill was brought before the House on the 10th July, and received the treatment which was to be expected.

deserves your hearty support. I need hardly say that no reform of the electoral system can be complete which does not aim at superseding the Hereditary Chamber. That a few gentlemen, representing a small opulent section of society, who already from the natural influences of their wealth and position exercise an oppressive effect upon politics, should inherit—irrespective of qualification or consent on the part of the governed—the personal right to oppose[1] the wishes of a nation, is in my opinion a flagrant usurpation of its sovereignty. The existence of so intoler-

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The *Daily Telegraph* on the following day faithfully discharged its duty as chief organ of British Phillistinism by the following observations: "A glance at the empty benches of the House of Commons yesterday afternoon sufficed to show that Philosophical Radicalism does not offer any charm to the most "practical" assembly in the world. . . . . The measure in fact is one of those to which the House is wont to deny the compliment even of open hostility, and which it usually treats with silent contempt. It is condemned by the fact that Mr. Morrison might have been as hopeful of success if he had proposed *to change the tides of the sea, or the motions of the planet Jupiter.*"

1 "The difficulty is not to prevent considerable changes, but to accomplish them even when most essentially needful. Any systematic provision in the constitution to render changes difficult is therefore worse than superfluous,—it is injurious."—*J. S. Mill, on the value of a Second Chamber. Diss: and Discs.* Vol. II. p. 403.

See also passages on House of Lords given in Appendix XIV.

able and humiliating an institution may be fitly reckoned as one of the causes of social revolt.

Such is the platform I beg to submit for your consideration. I need hardly say that it does not pretend to comprise all the most important measures which are desired by reformers. I have selected only those measures which, in my opinion, are the most pressing, and in the demand for which the majority of Radicals will unite. Candidates who will support them may be relied upon. The last measure (4) affords the means of obtaining whatsoever further reform may correspond with the intelligence and will of the nation. Let me therefore urge this platform upon you for adoption at the next General Election. If you are few and falter, take courage from the example of the Permissive Bill supporters and observe what a few resolute spirits may do in the midst of a purposeless vacillating society. The anti-slavery movement in America, commenced in a small dingy room, where but half-a-dozen poor men used to collect. If there be but one hundred upright, earnest, intelligent reformers in a borough, let them unite for the purpose of adopting, at the next election, some such uncompromising political platform as the one I suggest, and let them send their candidate to the poll; but they must understand that they will

never succeed in carrying him if they are not prepared to make personal sacrifices for ideas, and mutual concessions in the interest of a common cause. Let them select their leaders for honesty, sympathy, and intelligence, and then trust them; let them sink personalities, and above all things bring an absorbing devotion to the cause they espouse, bearing in mind the following words of Emerson,—

"Every great and commanding movement in the annals of the world is the triumph of enthusiasm."

And let this verse sink into their hearts:—

"No great deed is done
By falterers who ask for *certainty*.
No good is 'certain,' but the steadfast mind,—
The undivided will to seek the good,—
'Tis that compels the elements, and wrings
A human music from the indifferent air."

If such a spirit as the one indicated here animates working men and the party of reform, it will sweep like an invigorating gale across the land, clearing the social atmosphere of its morbid impurities, and dismissing to the chaos, from whence they emerged, the sinister causes I have described, which are productive of Social Revolt.

APPENDIX.

I.

"It is not uncommon for rich men, when addressing an audience of workmen, to say, 'My friends, *I* am a working man. I have been a working man all my life. I have been working with my brain as you have with your hands.' Yes, but that is just the difference. The one man has risen, say, at eight in the morning, from a comfortable bed, has come down stairs to a comfortable breakfast, read his newspaper, reached his place of business towards eleven o'clock, and then worked, perhaps, hard enough for some hours, but in a comfortable office, and with interest in his work so intense that he perhaps prefers it to any amusement, and then back to his comfortable dinner and bed. The other man has risen, perhaps, before daylight, has toiled ten or twelve hours, it may be under a broiling sun, or chilling rain, or under other conditions equally disagreeable, and at work which cannot have very much interest for him, first, because it is monotonous; secondly, because the product will not be his

when he has produced it. He has snatched his coarse food at intervals during the day, and has returned at night to an uncomfortable home."—"*The Social Future of the Working Classes.*"—*A Lecture by Professor Beesly.*

II.

"The tropical temperature and vitiated air of the work-room, and the reaction from the dull, colourless, unlovely, monstrous life, will produce a temperament morbidly craving for physical pleasure, a craving which imperatively demands gratification; and as no healthy means for gratifying it will be at hand, it will be sought in the excitement of alcoholic drink, or in another form of intemperance still more fatal, because it poisons the blood of the innocent and the unborn." —"*Influence of Civilisation on Health.*" *By J. H. Bridges, M.D.*

"Vice is not more surely productive of misery, than is misery of vice."—*Dr. Hodgson.*

III.

"What is meant by democracy? The only thing desired by the earnest democrat is this, that each should have a social position according to his personal advantages (merits). Thus democracy does not exclude the exigencies of inheritance, but, on the contrary, most fervently promotes the carrying out of these exigencies. If really the son of a superior

man be superior himself, he has only to show it, and democracy at once assigns him a superior position to that of the son of an inferior man. In this only does democracy differ from aristocracy: the one (democracy) takes account of exceptions, the other does not. If by chance—which is possible—the son of an 'inferior man' prove superior to the son of a 'superior man,' democracy will be just: not so aristocracy. Democracy, then, has all the advantages one looks for in aristocracy, without its drawbacks, and is therefore its superior."—*Dr. F. A. Hartsen.*

IV.

By a strange coincidence, the *Standard* found itself last year in agreement with many prominent radicals upon the subject of foreign policy. Upon discovering this, a remarkable change of tone was exhibited by the *Standard.* A meeting took place on January 10th, at St. James's Hall, convened for the purpose of urging upon the English Government the propriety of uniting with the Neutral Powers to oppose the dismemberment of France. Professor Beesley took the chair. The principal speakers were Mr. F. Harrison, Mr. Odger, Mr. Lloyd Jones, and Mr. Bradlaugh. The hall was crammed, and the most popular speaker was apparently Mr. Bradlaugh, for whom there were repeated cries, though it had not been arranged that he was to address the meeting. Notwithstanding this, the London Democracy, whose presence was

manifested by this notable feature, as well as by the reception accorded to Mr. Odger, suddenly became "respectable" in the opinion of the *Standard*. It published a leader on the 12th January, actually declaring that "the hall was completely crowded with a *respectable* audience," adding, "it is impossible to believe Mr. Gladstone can long continue to ignore the *popular voice*," and that "such meetings as these should teach him," &c. &c. It would seem from this, that people are "respectable," and represent the "popular voice" according as they happen to agree with the *Standard*. Last winter it was in violent disagreement with Mr. Odger, and he was termed a "whining hound."

V.

"It has become evident that the instruction in literature or in a few scientific specialities which constitutes what we now call education, confers no monopoly, either of sound sympathies or of breadth of view in political questions. That the spontaneous distribution of the products of labour, regulated by the ordinary working of what are called the laws of political economy, is compatible with enormous misery is but too evident. But all attempts to modify this spontaneous distribution have as yet gone so slightly beneath the surface as to warrant the belief that they have not been seriously made. And it is all but impossible for men who live in habitual

comfort to realise the necessity of making any such attempts seriously."—*Dr. Bridges.*

VI.

A translation for the benefit of the general reader--

Commune	...	Municipal Government.
Communist	...	An upholder of Municipal Government.

These definitions of the terms "Commune" and "Communist," (the latter being a malicious abbreviation of "Communalist,") explain exactly the sense in which they were applicable to the object, and to the supporters of the Parisian revolt. The vulgar translation given in England of Commune is "Community of Goods," and the Communalist is supposed to have been fighting for the purpose of obtaining this. There is, however, no act or declaration on the part of the Communal Government which gives the slightest justification for such an accusation. It is perfectly certain that those insurgents who fought for community o goods formed a small and obscure fraction of the whole body. The advocates of forcible sub-division of private property exist, as far as my experience teaches me, mostly in the imagination of misguided and thoughtless people.

VII.

We have at last the following remarkable admission on the part of the *Times* newspaper:—

"One-half, at least of the peasantry are illiterate; even those who are able to read, read nothing. . . . . All with them is blank intellectual desolation. Their oxen might be led to the polls with as much ease, or with as great difficulty, as themselves.

"And yet it is of the representatives of this supine and listless population that the majority of the present Assembly consists; that majority will always be in the ascendant whenever the influence either of Government or of the priests, or, in rare instances, some great national calamity, as in February of last year, enlists the innate conservative instincts of the country against the revolutionary tendencies of the city."—*Times*, Jan. 5th, 1872.

VIII.

While France, commencing with Clovis, has been under Monarchical or Imperial Governments for 1371 years, she has been under a Republic for the trifling space of *nineteen* years. And this period was interrupted by a monarchical restoration, which lasted 44 years. Yet it is pretended by some people that the Republic has been tried!

IX.

"The meaning which many intelligent people attach to religious freedom is simply a prerogative of uncontrolled liberty, if not, indeed, entire supremacy for the doctrines they themselves profess."—*Westminster Review.*

X.

As a specimen of priestly arrogance and of self-complacent bigotry on the part of a prominent leader of old religious thought towards the leaders of new religious thought, the following passage from a speech reported in the Daily Papers as made by Mr. Spurgeon is worth quoting: "He said that he had been censured by a certain paper for having spoken hard things against the modern school of thought. He would only say that if he had uttered anything that appeared hard it was intensely soft and gentle to what he would say if he knew how to say it, for he had no feeling towards it but that of inextinguishable hate. He loved the men but pitied their mistakes. He respected their characters wherever they were respectable men, and generally speaking they were so, but he regarded the modern school of thought as being Satan's principal instrument for undermining the citadel of truth. Many of these men were using the arts of Jesuits, for some held views contrary to the churches over which they presided; while others did not scruple to take texts and preach from the Bible in whose inspiration they did not believe. Towards them he had the same feeling as God had towards evil, only he could not feel it in the same infinite degree; but if there was any epithet they could fling at him that would show his hostility towards them he trusted they would say it. He felt flattered by their contempt and gratified by their animosity."

XI.

"Luxury is indeed possible in the future—innocent and exquisite; luxury for all, and by the help of all; but luxury at present can only be enjoyed by the ignorant; the cruelest man living could not sit at his feast, unless he sat blindfold."—*John Ruskin.*

XII.

"Morality is essentially one with physical truth. It is a kind of transcendental physiology."—*Herbert Spencer.*

XIII.

"The following table shows the proportion of the various taxes to be credited to the working and other classes on the principles thus stated:—

	Net Receipt from Customs, Excise, and Licence Duties.	Estimated Burden on Tax-payer.	Proportion paid by Middle and Upper Classes.	Proportion paid by Working Classes.
	£.	£.	£.	£.
Spirits . . .	15,669,165	23,503,747	7,834,582	15,669,165
Malt . . .	7,532,399	15,064,798	5,021,599	10,043,199
Wine . .	1,506,718	3,013,436	3,013,436	—
Tobacco . .	6,532,969	9,799,454	3,266,485	6,532,969
Tea	2,725,272	3,356,590	1,862,909	1,493,681
Sugar . . .	5,683,885	7,104,856	4,298,438	2,806,418
Coffee . . .	553,400	691,750	383,921	307,829
Corn . . .	797,639	1,595,278	531,759	1,063,519
Miscellaneous	759,261	1,518,538	1,518,538	—
£	41,760,708	65,648,447	27,731,667	37,916,780
Add Taxes falling exclusively on Middle and Upper Classes . .			8,647,867	—
TOTALS . . . . . £.			36,379,534	37,916,780

It appears from this table that the aggregate taxation on the working classes is rather higher than what falls on the rest of the community, but we have seen that their taxable income is barely one-half that of the others (£136,000,000 to £284,000,000), so that, in point of fact, their taxation is double that of their richer neighbours." *Financial Questions for the Reformed Parliament. Robert Griffin.—Fortnightly Review, December,* 1867. It must be born in mind that five years have elapsed since this table was prepared.

The argument contained in the following letter deserves consideration :—

"*To the Editor of the Financial Reformer.*

"SIR,—In answer to the objection that by duties on articles of daily consumption, the poor man is taxed out of all proportion more heavily than the rich man, it has been alleged by Mr. Dudley Baxter and others that the latter has to provide such articles for a numerous household, and that thus matters are squared. But, leaving out of the question the fact that such provision or non-provision makes all the difference between the wages or pay of indoor and out-door servants and dependents; and taking account of that between purchases wholesale, out of bond, on payment of Government duties only, and purchases in small quantities with retailers surcharges on the duties,—let us see how the matter really stands as between the poor and the rich."

"A working man with a wife and three children earns by hard labour 20*s.* per week. In his outlay weekly on necessaries and comforts such as Tea, Coffee, Sugar, Beer, Tobacco, Spirits, &c., which come under the head of indirect taxes, he has to contribute to the treasury in this outlay not less than 3*s.* weekly. Now let us assume that his three children count for one adult; that will bring the sum to one shilling per adult. Then let us take the Marquis of Bute with his £300,000 per annum, and see how many adults he would have to provide for in order to pay taxes of this kind in the same proportion as the working man. Say that in round numbers his income is £6,000 per week; multiply this by three, and we find that, in order to pay indirect taxes in proportion to his income at the same rate as the working man, the Marquis must have 18,000 adult consumers of taxable articles at his expense within his household.

Yours &c., T. B.

London, March 26th, 1870."

Mr. Ruskin must surely have been thinking of indirect taxation when he penned the following remonstrance:—

"Whereas it has long been known and declared that the poor have no right to the property of the rich, I wish it also to be known and declared that the rich have no right to the property of the poor."—*John Ruskin.*

XIV.

Mr. Goldwin Smith on the House of Lords.

" Not by reason and theory alone, but by overwhelming experience, the House of Lords stands condemned. For three centuries, dating from the Tudor period, it was the most powerful branch of the legislature, and for a century at least it had, through its nominees and dependents, the virtual control of the other branch. During the whole of that period pressing subjects for legislation abounded, not only in the direction of political reform, but in all directions —legal, ecclesiastical, educational, sanitary, and economical. Yet, in all those centuries, who can point out a single great measure of national improvement which really emanated from the House of Lords? On the other hand, who can point out a single great reform, however urgent at the time, however signally ratified afterwards by the approbation of posterity, which the House of Lords has not thrown out, or obstructed, and, if it could do nothing more, damaged and mutilated to the utmost of its power? As a matter of course, it upheld the rotten boroughs, and resisted the Reform Bill, till it was overcome by the threat of a swamping creation of peers, having first, in its wisdom, brought the nation to the verge of a civil war. As a matter of course, it resisted the progress of religious liberty, because the privileged Church was an outwork of the

privileged class. As a matter of course, it resisted, as a noble historian is compelled to confess, the extension of Habeas Corpus and of personal liberty. As a matter of course, it resisted the removal of restraints on the press. As a matter of course, it resisted the introduction of the ballot. All these were measures and movements which threatened political privilege. But the House of Lords has also resisted common measures of humanity, such as the abolition of the Slave Trade, and the reform of Criminal Law. Romilly's Bill for the abolition of the death punishment in cases of petty theft was thrown out by the Lords, and among the thirty-two who voted in the majority on that occasion were seven bishops."

" On all subjects about which popular feeling was not strongly excited, including many of the greatest importance to national progress, Reformers have abstained from moving, because they despaired of overcoming the resistance of the House of Lords. To make legislation on any important question possible, it is necessary to get a storm sufficient to terrify the Peers. *Thus all important legislation is made violent and revolutionary*, and this is your Conservative institution!

The House of Lords is spoken of as a seat of deliberate wisdom, whose measures undergo maturer consideration than in the less Conservative assembly —a fast nobleman of twenty-one being supposed to

be a graver personage than a popular representative at sixty. No popular measure in the House of Lords undergoes any real consideration whatever. Every one of them is condemned before its arrival there—condemned from its very birth: and the discussion in the House of Lords is no discussion, but a mere wavering of the balance between hate and fear. If fear preponderates, the measure lives, and we are called upon to admire the wisdom and tact of the concession. Only oligarchic measures, such as gagging bills and coercion bills, are favoured from their birth, and pass by acclamation."

"Hereditary aristocracy has of late entered on a new phase. As in the Tudor epoch it became an oligarchy of landlordism, now it has become an oligarchy of wealth. The new nobility in this case are the capitalists who, after a temporary antagonism caused by the Corn Laws, and a certain amount of coy resistance on social grounds, have been recognised by the landowners, and in their turn are decking themselves with the titles of feudal barons, ordering Norman pedigrees with their equipages and liveries, doubling the crush and the deliquescence at St. James's, and thinking it a part of their rights as millionaires to make public honour and national government their family property, and to hand them down, with the other fruits of successful speculation, to their aristocratically educated sons."

"We are asked what we would put in the place of

the House of Lords. Is it necessary to put anything in its place? Is a second Chamber really necessary or desirable? Ontario does very well without one. Quebec is moving to get rid of hers. The Upper Chamber in the Dominion Parliament of Canada is almost a nullity. In Victoria the second Chamber produced a dead-lock, which probably would have been repeated in Ontario, if a rivalry of Chambers had been added to a rivalry of parties in the constitutional crisis through which the province has just passed. The Upper Chamber is supposed to be a check on unwise legislation. The House of Lords, in a superficial study of which the whole theory of second Chambers seems to have had its source, is a check with a vengeance, because it represents an interest separate from, and adverse to that of the nation. But you cannot really divide the national will. Power will unite somewhere; and it is better to unite with it the full measure of responsibility."

"If the object is to guard against precipitation, that object would be best secured by good legislative forms, and possibly by giving a minority, amounting to a certain proportion of the House, the power of suspending for a certain period the operation of a measure, so as to give time for calmer consideration, and for a possible change of national opinion."—*Fortnightly Review, March*, 1872.

Mr. Disraeli on the House of Lords.

"Suppose—which God forbid—there was no House of Commons, and some Englishman—I will take him from either end of the island—a Cumberland or a Cornish man, finds himself aggrieved. The Cumbrian says, "This conduct I experience is most unjust. I know a Cumberland man in the House of Lords, the Earl of Carlisle or the Earl of Londsdale; I will go to him; he will never see a Cumberland man ill-treated." The Cornish man will say, "I will go to the Lord of Port Eliot; his family have sacrificed themselves before this for the liberties of Englishmen, and he will get justice done me." So if there were, unhappily, no House of Commons, in every part of England where a man was in trouble he would remember that, from the very nature of representative property, there must be in the House of Lords a man connected with his County, with all the local influences which so largely contribute to the peculiar character of Englishmen." . . . . . .

. . . . . .

"It appears by the census that the population at this time is about 32,000,000. It is shewn by the last registration that, after making the usual deductions for deaths, removals, double entries, and so on, the constituency of the United Kingdom may be placed at 2,300,000. So, gentlemen, it at once appears that there are nearly 30,000,000 people in this country

who are as much represented by the House of Lords as by the House of Commons, and who, for the protection of their rights, must mainly depend upon the majesty of the Throne."—*Speech at Free Trade Hall, Manchester, April 3rd, 1872.*

The above argument, as a justification of the House of Lords, was seriously addressed by the Conservative leader to an immense meeting of grown-up people.

"Beyond that lies the darkened chamber of the labourer, who only rises to toil and lies down to rest. It is lighted by no hope, mellowed by no comfort; looks into gardens it created, and up to wealth which it has garnered, and has no pleasure thence; looks down into its cradle—and there is no hope.

"If John Stuart Mill, who rejects the four Gospels, shall agitate Europe, so that working-men shall be lifted from the pit they now occupy (a pit which is worse than any hell Calvin ever imagined), then I would say that Lord Shaftesbury is a dreamer, and John Stuart Mill the apostolic successor of St. Paul.

"Viewed broadly, and noting the distinctive nature of Christianity, when Voltaire thundered across Europe in defence of Calas, struggling for rational religion, he was nearer to the heart of Christ than Jeremy Taylor when he wrote his eloquent and most religious essay, 'Holy Living and Dying,'"—"*Christianity a Battle, not a Dream.*" *Wendell Phillips.*

"The moral story for the poor generally is, that a labourer with his six children has nothing to live upon but mouldy bread and dirty water; yet nothing can exceed his cheerfulness and content—no murmurs.

no discontent; of mutton he has scarcely heard, of bacon he never dreams; farinaceous bread and the water of the pool constitute his food, establish his felicity, and excite his warmest gratitude. The squire or parson of the parish always happens to be walking by, and overhears him praying for the King, and the Members of the County, and for all in authority; and it generally ends with their offering him a shilling, which this excellent man declares he does not want, and will not accept. These are the tracts which goodies and noodles are dispensing with unwearied diligence. It would be a great blessing if some genius would arise who had a talent of writing for the poor.' *Sidney Smith.*

"The English live under squires, territorial potentates, extensive employers, and local oligarchs, and under this régime they endure an amount of positive tyranny or negative neglect, that they would not find surpassed under the most despotic system of the continent."

It will amaze the reader to learn that this inflammatory passage is taken from the *Times* newspaper.—Date, October 19th, 1864. I find it preserved with many other useful passages in Mr. Partridge's work "On Democracy."—(Trübner & Co.)

"There are two classes of philanthropy: one alleviates and the other cures. There is one class of philanthropy that undertakes when a man commits an evil to help him out of it. There is another class that endeavours to abolish the temptation."—*Wendell Phillips.*

"After ages will moralise on the hallucination under which an exceptional and transitional state of things, marking the last phase in the existence of an old feudal monarchy, has been regarded, and confidently propagated, as the normal and final state of man."—*Goldwin Smith.*

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